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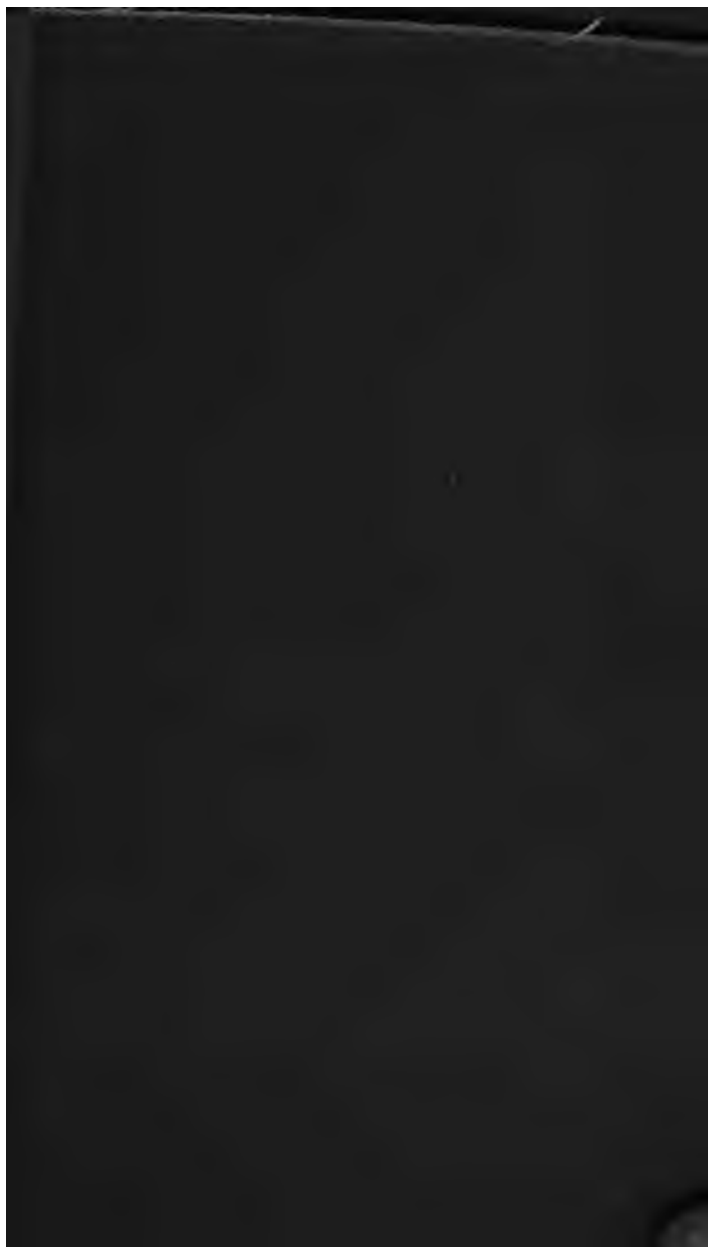
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THE CHURCH ON THE ROCK;
OR,
THE CLAIMS, AND SOME DISTINCTIVE DOCTRINES,
OF THE CHURCH OF ROME CONSIDERED,
IN
SIX LECTURES,

DELIVERED AT ST. MARY CHURCH, DEVON,

BY THE

REV. J. MASON COX, M.A.

FORMERLY SCHOLAR OF LINCOLN COLLEGE, OXFORD,
AND ASSISTANT CURATE OF ST. MARY CHURCH.

"Ye are built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets."—*Ephes.* ii. 20.

"The Rock was Christ, whom Simon confessing, as the whole Church confesses Him, obtained the name of Peter."—*St. Augustine Retract.* xxi. 1.

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PREFACE.

THE following Lectures, occasioned by local circumstances, are published in compliance with the wishes of some of those who heard them, who thought that they might be useful in a wider sphere than that for which they were originally intended.

The subjects treated of are those which naturally suggested themselves as the main points at issue, and as most prominently noticed in the Thirty-nine Articles.

The chief facts and arguments are drawn from the masterly treatises of Archbishop Ussher and Bishop Barrow ; the valuable Letters to Mr. Butler, which are among the earliest productions of our venerable Diocesan ;

the Bishop of Ely's Exposition of the Articles, and other standard works.

They are laid before the Church, with earnest prayer to her Divine Head that so far as they are agreeable to "the faith once delivered to the saints" He would vouchsafe to bless them to the promotion of His glory and the edification of His people.

ST. MARY CHURCH,
February 12, 1865.

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LECTURE I.

ANTIQUITY THE PRINCIPLE OF APOSTOLIC TEACHING.

GAL. i. 8.

“Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.”

IN these awful words the Apostle St. Paul delivers his protest against the false teaching with which the Churches of Galatia were being corrupted at the time he wrote. It was only a short time* since he had been preaching the Gospel in those regions, had been received with every sign of gladness and affection, and had hoped, doubtless, that the foundations were laid of a solid and abiding work. But now he heard that in that instance—as in how many others in the history of the Church—the

* Acts xvi. 6. The Epistle to the Galatians is generally supposed to have been written during St. Paul's stay at Ephesus (Acts xix. 23), though some suppose it was written from Corinth. (Acts xx. 3.) In any case, it would not have been more than three or four years after the Apostle's visit to Galatia.

work of Christ was hindered and marred by the devices of the enemy. Judaizing teachers had entered like wolves among the flock and corrupted the simplicity of the faith, and the servant of Christ had to look upon a work, two or three years before so happily commenced, now spoiled and well-nigh undone. No wonder that he should express himself on such an occasion in solemn and energetic language—language which, from its appropriateness and depth of application, should serve as an abiding warning to the Church. The very word here used, which we translate “accursed”—in the Greek *ἀνάθεμα*—has been ever since employed in the Christian Church to express its condemnation of error; and whenever error has been so condemned by the Church—as was done in a late instance by the Church of England in her synodical assembly—it has been in imitation of not the words only, but the example of the Apostle.

And, what is still more important, these words express the ground and principle of such condemnation, and supply a test by which in every age false teaching may be detected.

What the Apostle condemns is the teaching among the Galatians *any other* Gospel than that they had received. He was so thoroughly certain that what he had taught came only from God—so confident both of its correctness and of its completeness as a revelation of Divine

truth—that there needed, in his judgment, no other condition to determine the falsity of any new teaching than that it was *different* from what had been already taught. Now, it is *this* principle that distinguishes the Christian faith from every other kind of knowledge. All other knowledge comes to us by reason and experience, and is constantly receiving fresh accessions, as man's reason extends in its operation, or the field of his experience enlarges. In science, the fact that an opinion is old is a presumption rather against than in favour of its truth; because in the subjects with which science deals, knowledge was not bestowed once for all upon man, but he has been left, in the course of ages, by the exercise of his natural faculties to acquire it for himself. He will, therefore, be continually arriving at new facts, and, through the acquisition of new facts, will be ever modifying and correcting his previous conclusions. It is different with that truth which is the subject of Revelation. The very notion of *Revelation* is that of a communication by God to man of such truth as he could not otherwise have known; consequently, that Revelation would not serve its purpose which is not, as far as that purpose is concerned, perfectly correct and thoroughly complete. The Revelation once made must be sufficient and final *; no new facts

* Of course a Revelation may be *progressive*, the latter parts

can add to the knowledge already bestowed, no experience can modify the conclusions already formed. In the faith that is founded upon Revelation, *antiquity* must ever be the test of truth, and *novelty* a note of falsehood; and the solemn words of the Apostle's warning to the Galatians will ever serve, like the Cherub's fiery sword, to guard the deposit of the faith. "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel than that ye have received, let him be"—whatever his authority, whatever his appearance of Divine mission—"accursed."

It would be easy to show that other passages of Scripture express or imply the same principle—that *the system of truth communicated to the Apostles was entire and complete; that they had full knowledge of all that it concerned them to know, and that the main duty of the Church after them was to guard the deposit committed by them to its keeping*. The first and second of these points is implied in the very promise of our Lord regarding the Comforter—that He should "teach them all things, and bring all things to their remembrance *,"—"guide them into all truth †;" and in the words of St. John ‡, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all

explaining the former. But *once completed* it must possess the character named in the text.

* John xiv. 26.

† John xvi. 13.

‡ 1 John ii. 20.

things;” the third, in St. Paul’s exhortation to Timothy* to “hold fast the form of sound words,” and to “keep by the Holy Ghost that good thing which was committed unto” him;—in that of St. Jude, to “contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints†;” and, apparently, also in the solemn words which close the Revelation of St. John—words which can hardly but refer, not to that book only, but to the whole canon of the New Testament Scriptures—“I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book‡.”

It may likewise be shown that the same principle was recognized and acknowledged in the first ages of the Church, and is often expressed by early Christian writers.

Irenæus§ says, “We have received the disposition of our salvation by none other than those by whom the Gospel came to us, which they then preached, and afterwards by God’s

* 2 Tim. i. 13, 14.

† Rev. xxii. 18, 19.

† Jude 3.

§ Adv. Hær. iii. 1.

will delivered to us in the Scriptures, to be the pillar and ground of our faith." And again *, "The true knowledge" (in opposition to that false knowledge which the Gnostic heretics boasted that they possessed) "is the teaching of the Apostles—the original settlement of the Church throughout the world, . . . which has come even to us, the fullest interpretation of the Scriptures being therein preserved without deceit, *admitting neither of addition nor diminution.*"

So Tertullian speaks of a "Rule of Faith" (identical with the Creed) "which the Church scattered through the world diligently keeps." And in another place †, "Christ Jesus our Lord did Himself, while He lived in the world, declare what He was, what He had been, what He determined should be done by man, either openly to the people or privately to His disciples. Wherefore, when departing to the Father after His resurrection, He commanded them to go and teach all nations, &c. . . . Immediately therefore the Apostles, having obtained power of the Holy Spirit . . . went forth into the world and preached the same doctrine of the same faith to the nations, and founded Churches in every city. Hence, all doctrine must be accounted true which agreeth with

* Adv. Hær. iv. 53, 2.

† De Præscript. xx. The whole treatise is an exposition of the principle of Antiquity.

the Churches founded by the Apostles—the mothers and originals of the faith—as without doubt containing that *which the Churches have received from the Apostles, the Apostles from Christ, Christ from God*, and all other doctrine must be judged at once to be false which savoureth things contrary to the truth of the Churches, and of the Apostles, and of Christ, and of God.”

What has been said may serve to show the principle of Apostolic teaching; we may deduce from hence some important conclusions as to the character of any teaching with which that principle is inconsistent. More than one erroneous system must fall before that touchstone, if it once be conceded that *according to the New Testament, antiquity is an essential character of truth, and novelty of error*. Especially is the application of it fatal to the teaching of the Church of Rome. For the distinctive dogma of Romanism is, that the authority of the Pope is equal to and co-ordinate with that of the Apostles; that the same Divine guidance enjoyed by them is continued to the Bishop of Rome; that, consequently, whatever the Pope decrees must be received as infallible—as the voice of God Himself. Now, whatever else may be said about such a claim, I fear not to assert that it is inconsistent with the principle contained in the text. If a definite and complete system of doctrine was once for all given

to the Church, how can any living authority have power to add to it,—diminish from it,—alter it as he pleases? If the teaching of any other Gospel than that preached by the Apostles be sufficient to draw down an Apostolic anathema upon the teacher, whether that teacher be one of the Apostles themselves, or be sent as an angel from heaven—and no Pope can claim higher authority than that—is it not plain that the teaching of the Pope himself should be within the limits of the original revelation to the Apostles, that with that revelation it should in all respects agree, and by it is liable to be tried, and according to its agreement or non-agreement with the inspired teaching of the Apostles it must either be accepted as true, or condemned as heretical and false? In the sober words of our Twentieth Article, “The Church hath power to decree rites or ceremonies, and authority in controversies of faith: and yet *it is not lawful for the Church to ordain any thing contrary to God’s Word written.*”

You will understand, brethren, my reason for bringing this particular subject before you at the present time. You know that circumstances have unhappily brought that form of error and schism which consists in an acknowledgment of the claims of the Bishop of Rome, to the neglect of Scripture and antiquity, and in disparagement of the canonical authority of the Bishops of this Church, particularly under our

notice, and rendered it possible that any one of you may be subjected to the temptation, under which some who were among us have unhappily fallen, to exchange the pure apostolical teaching of the Church of England for the, in many points, corrupt and misleading system of Rome. Against such a temptation it has seemed plainly our duty, as the canonical pastors of this portion of the flock of Christ, to give you special warning. And though for some reasons we would gladly be silent, and avoid touching on difficult and painful subjects—for controversy is always painful;—avoid the appearance of uncharitable condemnation of our brethren, and of speaking evil of any who name the name of Christ, and the risk through our unskilfulness of doing after all more harm than good,—yet, forasmuch as we are pledged to “be ready with all faithful diligence to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrine contrary to God’s Word*,”—and we do from our hearts believe that much of the modern teaching of Rome is of that character,—we feel that we should be failing in our duty if we did not make the attempt to set before you plainly what that teaching is, and in what respects it is erroneous; and so, while fortifying you against that particular form of error, to build you up in a more stedfast and hearty adherence to the

* Ordination Service.

Apostolical and Catholic faith and discipline preserved to us by God's mercy in our branch of the Church. And I heartily pray, and entreat you to join your prayers with mine to God, that He may be pleased to guide me in this endeavour to advance His truth; that so far as we have the truth He would preserve us in it and deepen and enlarge our knowledge of it,—that where we have it not, or have it but imperfectly, He would enlighten us to receive it,—and direct all our doings to His glory, to the unity and peace of the Church, and our own eternal welfare, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

I have begun with setting before you the teaching of the text and other kindred passages of Scripture, because it has always seemed to me that the principle there contained, of the *finality and completeness* of the Apostles' teaching, is one fundamentally inconsistent with the Roman theory of a living infallible voice forming in all ages the supreme criterion of truth. For the Apostle, under guidance of the Holy Spirit, to anathematize those who should teach any other Gospel,—who should promulgate any other faith, than that which he had delivered, clearly implies,—first, that what he had delivered was sufficient and complete, and needed no addition; secondly, that what he taught was of supreme authority, so that whatever was taught in after times, by any person whatsoever, must be tried by it as a standard, and according to its agree-

ment with it must stand or fall. But if this be so, then, first, a living infallible voice is not needed in the Church, and secondly, whatever authority is possessed by the Church, and wherever it resides, it is still subordinate to the voice of Scripture, and if at variance with it must be cast out and condemned. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them*." Now these principles are fatal to the claims of Rome in more than one way. Not only do they show the *needlessness* of that living infallible voice of which Romanists love to boast, but they also confine all subsequent teaching within the limits of the original revelation, and impose *a test and criterion of truth in all ages*, which Rome herself has practically thrown aside.

It is hardly needful in the present state of the controversy to take in detail the distinctive doctrines of Rome, and try them by the test of Scripture and Antiquity. The appeal to Scripture and Antiquity is one which Rome has practically surrendered—surrendered, I do not fear to say, because she knows,—because her ablest champions know,—it is a ground on which she cannot meet us. As long as the dispute with Rome was only one as to the meaning of texts, in which the Protestant opposed his

private judgment to the Romanist's appeal to the Church, the Romanist had generally the advantage in the conflict. But when once Antiquity was called in, as a witness both of the interpretation of Scripture and of the belief of the first ages of the Church, its voice—though indeed it gives no countenance to many forms of Protestantism—is fatal to the claims of Rome. And therefore Rome avoids the conflict on this ground. Her only citadel now is the claim of Infallibility, and that claim, as I think we shall see, rests really on nothing but assumption. And to show you that this is not mere assertion, let me mention two facts which appear to establish its truth.

A few years ago the Church of Rome put forward a new article of faith. The article was that the Blessed Virgin Mary was conceived and born without any spot or taint of sin. That doctrine is now become, in the eyes of Romanists, an article of the Catholic Faith, which whoever does not believe is in danger of damnation. To prove the truth of that article from Scripture is simply impossible, and was never attempted. To attempt to justify it by an appeal to the Fathers or early Christian writers was equally futile. Nay, some of the ancient Fathers had in so many words denied and condemned the opinion*. And yet, in the face of

* St. Bernard (Ad Canon. Lugdun.) states in the strongest

these facts, on the sole authority of the Pope and his Council, the doctrine was established, and it is now heretical to doubt it.

Another fact is this. Twenty years ago a great English divine, one of the ablest men and greatest theologians of the age (whose name is familiar to us all), unhappily seceded to the Church of Rome. He had been one of the promoters of that great movement which had for its object the restoration to the consciousness and belief of the people of England some important Catholic truths which, though contained in the Prayer Book, had long been neglected and obscured. That movement,—though producing under God many great benefits to the Church,—in some respects, as human nature is ever prone to extremes,—overstepped its limits; and one of its disastrous results was the surrender to Rome, against whose claims he had long and ably contended, of this its great promoter. Now on what ground did Dr. Newman become a Romanist? Was it that he was convinced, after long inquiry, that Scripture and Antiquity justified her claims? No; on that ground he had long successfully resisted Rome. He joined her only through being induced to abandon that ground altoget-

terms that “Mary was conceived in sin.” Also Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiæ*, iii. 27. So also St. Augustine, *De Civ. Dei*, xx. 20, “Christ *alone* was found without sin. Except the One Mediator . . . no one is pure from soil.”

ther. He was led to adopt a theory the direct contrary of the principle which we have seen to be contained in the words of the text. That theory was, that Christian doctrine was the result of a certain process of *development*, by which in the course of ages dogmas, unknown before, came to be part and parcel of the faith. It was on that theory that Dr. Newman seceded to the Church of Rome*. It was with a book written by him to maintain this theory in his hands † that he was admitted to the communion of that Church. By so admitting him, the Church of Rome testified its approval of his theory, and with that concurred in the admission from which that theory starts, that on the ground of Antiquity the claims of Rome cannot be defended; that it is only by abandoning it and trusting to other theories that her cause can be maintained. And that, though almost every page of the Apostles' writings shows that a definite system of doctrines was once for all delivered by them to the Church; which the Church was solemnly warned to maintain, and neither add to, diminish from, nor alter, by the solemn charge, "Though we, or an

* See Note at the end of this Lecture.

† The preface to the *Essay on Development* is dated October 6th, 1845, and the author was received into the Church of Rome two days afterwards. See Wordsworth's *Letters on the Church of Rome*, Letter i. p. 10; also Newman's *Apologia*, p. 366.

angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel to you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."

I believe then, that we may regard these two points as certain—first, that the true principle of Christian doctrine is that of a complete and definite system once for all delivered to the Church; secondly, that the Church of Rome has virtually abandoned that principle, and by so doing condemns herself.

I propose hereafter to examine in detail some other points of the controversy. Taking for granted that all the dogmas of Rome must be brought to the test of Antiquity*, I propose to examine by it—first, the claim of Papal infallibility, and then those other doctrines which mainly distinguish Rome from the rest of the Catholic Church. Let us remember, while we do this, the responsibility that such an examination involves. If we are at liberty to reject all that Antiquity does not sanction, we are equally bound to accept what it commends. To diminish from "the faith once delivered to the saints" is as culpable as to add to it. To explain away as mysterious and unintelligible the plain words of Scripture, to condemn as

* Under the term Antiquity I suppose Scripture to be included. The New Testament is the *earliest*, as well as an inspired, record of the teaching of Christ and His Apostles. The ancient Creeds, and the writings of the Fathers, are also a witness of the faith of the *early* Church.

superstitious the faith and practice of the earliest ages of the Church, is to fall on the other side into the same fault of which we accuse the Church of Rome. It is not in that spirit that we can pursue the controversy with any success. It is not that spirit that animates the solemn protest which the Anglican branch of the Church Catholic directs against her teaching.

Let us never forget, that if we are Protestants we are Catholics too, claiming with the Church universal the same precious heritage of faith, submitting to whatever has been—always,—every where,—“by all,” believed. Let us never allow the Romanist to usurp that name, for so we put a weapon in his hands which he well knows how to use against us. More converts have been made to Rome from the shifting sands of modern Protestantism than from the firm ground of Catholic truth.

Above all, let us do all in the spirit of true charity. Let us love those, wherever they are, who love our dear Lord and Saviour. Let us think of our own faults : our own sad divisions,—our unfruitfulness under our privileges, our want of zeal for God’s truth and God’s glory, which the earnestness of others shames,—and strive and pray that by “speaking the truth in love,” and continually increasing conformity to the image of His holiness, both we and those who are now divided from us “may grow up

into Him in all things which is the head, even Christ*."

* Eph. iv. 15.

NOTE.

"It was on this theory (of Development) that Dr. Newman seceded to the Church of Rome." This statement may appear inconsistent with Dr. Newman's own account of the causes of his secession in his recently published work, "*Apologia pro Vitâ Suâ*." Indeed the writer of these Lectures had not had an opportunity of consulting that work at the time the Lectures were delivered. But although the account there given shows that the cause of Dr. Newman's secession was not the Theory of Development, but a supposed resemblance between the Anglican position and that of the Monophysites in the fifth century, it also abundantly proves that, in Dr. Newman's mind, *the principle of Antiquity* was being gradually abandoned;—that having at first been used to balance Antiquity on the side of Anglicanism against Catholicity on the side of Rome (Apol. p. 198), he was afterwards induced to surrender the former for the sake of the latter, and submit to Rome and all her teaching because her voice appeared to him to be that of the Catholic Church.

The fundamental error, both of the latter view and of that which preceded it, is the *separation of Antiquity from Catholicity*, as if that could be truly Catholic which was not Ancient also. The Catholic Church is *the Church of all ages*, not that of the *present* only. The well-known dictum of Vincentius, "*QUOD SEMPER, QUOD UBIQUE, QUOD AB OMNIBUS*," supplies the test of Time equally with that of Extent; and to take up with one at the expense of the other is to surrender one of the essential notes of truth.

See an able statement of this principle in the Preface by the late Rev. H. Newland to the Commentary, edited by him, on the Epistle to the Ephesians.

LECTURE II.

THE SCRIPTURE EVIDENCE FOR THE POPE'S SUPREMACY EXAMINED.

MATT. xvi. 18.

“I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

THE corner-stone of the Romish system is the dogma of Papal Infallibility. It is the foundation on which all other doctrines rest, and the argument put forth to silence all objections. It is therefore of the greatest importance in the inquiry on which we have entered that we should carefully examine this subject; that we should see what is meant by the term,—what is involved in the doctrine,—and on what evidence those claims are rested which call for the obedience of the world. Let us do this, brethren, in a solemn and earnest spirit, in entire dependence on the help of God, and with a simple desire to ascertain His truth. May no word of mine mislead you; may no prejudice hinder us from seeing and acknowledging the truth; may He

of His mercy guide and confirm us and His whole Church in obedience to His holy will, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The word infallible means incapable of error. The doctrine of Papal Infallibility is*, that the Bishop of Rome, as the successor of St. Peter and Vicar of Christ on earth, is in all his decisions and official acts so guided by the Holy Spirit that they are all certainly according to the truth and will of God. What we ordinarily believe to have been the case with the inspired Prophets and Apostles, the Romanist believes to be the case with the Pope. It should be mentioned, however, for the sake of accuracy, that it appears a disputed point among Romish theologians whether infallibility resides in the Pope himself, or in the Pope and a General Council. The difference is practically of little moment, for as in the

* The Council of Florence (A.D. 1439) defines that, "The Apostolical See and the Roman Pontiff is the successor of St. Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, the true Vicar of Christ, and the Head of the Church; that he is the Father and Doctor of all Christians, and that to him, in St. Peter, full power is committed to feed, direct, and govern the Catholic Church." The spiritual claims of the Popedom are also thus stated by the great Roman controversialist, Cardinal Bellarmine (*De Romano Pontifice*): "The Bishop of Rome succeeds St. Peter in the sovereignty of the Church, has the power of appointing and confirming Bishops throughout the world, and also of deposing and restoring them; of making and dispensing with laws throughout the Universal Church; that he is the judge of controversies, and his judgment is certain and infallible."

eyes of the Church of Rome a General Council can only be summoned by the Pope, and must consist only of those who acknowledge his supremacy, the Council is pretty certain to be of the same mind as the Pope, and the result is in either case the same.

Before examining into the grounds on which this doctrine rests, I will notice an argument often put forward, by which it would seem many persons are misled. The argument is generally stated in this form—"We all need an infallible teacher;—the Church of Rome alone claims to be infallible;—therefore the Church of Rome is the teacher that we need." Of course the argument as I have stated it, is logically unsound. In the second proposition it is taken for granted, that because the Church of Rome *claims* to be infallible she *is* so, which of course is begging the whole question, and is like saying that the present holder of any estate must be the lawful possessor because there is no other claimant. But, further, it is not true, or true only in a limited sense, that the Church of Rome alone claims to be infallible. She is the only *living* teacher which claims infallibility, but she is by no means the only authority which is believed to be infallible. All Christians believe they have an infallible teacher, and the only question among them is where that infallibility is found. Some believe that it is in Scripture, some in the decisions of General Councils.

The Rationalist believes in the supremacy of reason, and of "a verifying faculty" to test the teaching of God's Word. The Protestant confides in his own private interpretation of Scripture,—the Catholic (not the Romanist) in Scripture as interpreted by the Universal Church. Each one of these believes he has a teacher who cannot err, and for the Romanist to say that he alone believes himself to have an infallible teacher is simply untrue. Which of these has the best claim to our obedience must be decided, as all such questions must be decided, by evidence and a careful comparison of their respective claims. And in such a comparison it is worth noting that, to a certain point, all parties are agreed. All Christians, except perhaps the modern Rationalist, agree as to the Divine authority of Holy Scripture; all Catholics, ourselves among them, admit the authority of the Universal Church as "the pillar and ground of the truth." So far contending parties are at one; but, in arrogating the same Divine authority to the decrees of the Roman Pontiff and his Council, the Romanist stands alone. And therefore the evidence should be very strong by which such a claim must be supported. To suppose that the mere assertion of it is evidence of its validity is utterly absurd. The man who speaks loudest in a crowd may sometimes command attention, but it will not follow that his words are most worth hearing, or that he has

the best authority to speak. He who speaks to us in the name of God, and claims Divine authority for his words, who presumes to wield the powers of Eternal Justice, and threatens with damnation all who fail to obey him, must needs show a good title to the sceptre which he sways; and to examine into it before we submit to it, is the solemn duty of us all.

And I think it is equally plain that only one kind of title can be valid. Only the grant of the original holder can confer so precious an estate. Only the word of God Himself can bestow a power so tremendous. We know indeed that Christ our Lord was sent by the Father, and that He was so sent, He gave many signs and wonders to prove. We know that when entering after His Resurrection upon His Mediatorial kingdom, when "all power was given to Him in heaven and in earth*," He commissioned His Apostles, saying, "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you †," and bade them "go into all the world ‡," to preach and baptize in His name, and promised He would be with them, even to the end. Then we believe He made the Church His kingdom upon earth, and constituted the Apostles its rulers. And if, in addition to this, He made another special dispensation, and constituted one of the Apostles

* Matt. xxviii. 18.

† John xx. 21.

‡ Matt. xxviii. 19.

as Head and Prince over the rest, and not him alone, but also his successors in a particular Church and See to have rule and sovereignty, for it is nothing less, over the successors of his brother Apostles; if Christ did this, can there be the least doubt that this also must be upon record, and that nothing short of such record and Divine warranty can claim or justify our submission? It is not sufficient to point to a long vista of ages during which the power in question has been exercised by the Roman Pontiff and admitted by the Church. He that claims to rule in the name of Christ must have Christ's own word for His authority, and to none other may we or will we defer.

To bring the question to a narrow issue: Christ our Lord has promised salvation to all that believe and are baptized*. The Roman Pontiff restrains this offer, and narrows—fearful thought—the blessings of redemption to those who submit to him †. But the sovereign's word the sovereign alone can alter. Nothing but the plain word of Christ can qualify the promise of His grace. If that word be wanting or uncertain, we may safely set aside the Papal claim.

* Mark xvi. 16.

† "All the faithful of Christ are of necessity of salvation under the Roman Pontiff." "We declare, say, define, and pronounce, that it is of necessity of salvation to every creature to be subject to the Roman Pontiff."—Canons of Pope Boniface VIII., quoted in Phillpotts's *Letters to Butler*, p. 278.

But the Romanist will answer our challenge. He points to the words of the text, and tells us triumphantly that there is what we seek. In that, and in those other words recorded in the twenty-first chapter of St. John, where the Lord commands His Apostle to feed His sheep and lambs, he claims to find the Divine warrant for the Papal power. And truly they are solemn and weighty words, words that for a moment might seem to justify the interpretation given them by Rome. If the Gospel warrant for those claims—we have seen that nothing less will suffice—is to be found any where, it must be here. If these passages are clear in their testimony, the question is decided; but if they are doubtful and uncertain,—if the Roman interpretation is open to question at every step,—if the rest of the New Testament lends it no support, and the testimony of the earliest ages shows that it was then unrecognized, then may we not safely conclude that the prop is too weak to bear the weight,—the foundation too slender for the colossal edifice that has been raised upon it?

In these words, says the Roman controversialist, Christ declared that His Church should be *built upon* St. Peter, i. e. that it should rest upon his authority and that of his successors in the See of Rome, and that depending upon the Roman Pontiff it should be preserved from error and harm. This is the Romish interpre-

tation of the passage. But observe how many things in it are taken for granted.

First, it is assumed that St. Peter *himself* is the rock on which the Church was to be built. To this assumption there are the following objections: First, the words employed in the original Greek are against it;—the name given to the Apostle being Πέτρος (*petros*), “a stone,” while the term translated “rock” is a different form, Πέτρα (*petra*), always denoting the larger unbroken mass, while *petros* is used for the smaller. Secondly, it is inconsistent with the way in which the same figure is employed in other places of Scripture; such as where Christ is called the foundation*, and we are said to be built on Him†, or else built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone‡. Thirdly, it is a point on which there is among the Fathers and early Christian writers great diversity of opinion§, some taking

* 1 Cor. iii. 11. † Col. ii. 7. ‡ Eph. ii. 20.

§ The following quotations may serve as instances:—

St. Chrysostom, in his Commentary on the passage, says: “‘On the rock,’ that is, ‘on the *faith* of his confession.’” And again, “‘Upon the Rock,’—He does not mean upon Peter, for *it is not founded upon man*, but upon faith in Himself,—He hath built His Church.”

St. Hilary (de Trin. 6): “The building of the Church is *upon this rock of confession*.”

St. Gregory of Nyssen (Testem. contra Jud. vol. ii. p. 162). “The Lord is the rock, and, as it were, the foundation of faith, as the Lord Himself saith to the chief of the Apostles: Thou art

the rock to mean St. Peter, others the confession he had just made of faith in Christ, others Christ Himself. Those again who understand the term of St. Peter, differ as to whether it relates to him personally, or simply

Peter, and upon this rock will I build My Church, i. e. *upon the confession of Christ*, because he had said, Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God."

St. Ambrose (De Incarnat. Domini Sacrament. c. 5): "Faith therefore is the foundation of the Church. For it was said not of the body of Peter, but *of his faith*, that the gates of hell should not prevail against it." And again (Lib. vi. in Evang. Lucæ): "*The rock is Christ*, who also allowed to His disciple the favour of this name, that he also should be *Peter*, because he had *from the Rock* the solidity of constancy and the firmness of faith."

St. Augustine (in Johan. Tract. 124): "Upon this Rock, wherein thou hast confessed, I will build My Church." And in his Retractations (i. 21) he tells us, that he had formerly interpreted the passage of Peter, but that he afterwards thought it more correct to understand it of Him whom Peter confessed. "For it was not said to him, Thou art Petra, the rock; but, Thou art Petrus, the stone. For the Rock is Christ, whom Simon confessing, as the whole Church confesses Him, was called Peter."

What is most remarkable, three Popes appear to have sanctioned this interpretation.

Felix III. (Ep. v.) says: "Upon that confession of yours I will build My Church."

St. Gregory the Great (Ep. iii. 33): "Persist in the true faith, and fix your life upon the Rock of the Church, i. e. *upon the confession of blessed Peter, the Prince of the Apostles*."

And Adrian I., in a letter to the Bishops of Spain and Gaul (Hard. Concil. iv. p. 867), says: "Upon this Rock which thou hast confessed, and from which thou hast obtained the honour of that name, I will build My Church."

To the same effect write Cyril of Alexandria, Basil of Seleucia, Theodoret, Isidore of Pelusium, and Theophylact.

as a believer in Christ, or as representing the Church. Or again, though acknowledging the Church to be built upon him, they deny that it is built on him exclusively, but only in common with the other Apostles*. Now I wish to call attention to the fact, that unless the term Rock in this passage be intended personally and exclusively of St. Peter, the Roman inference from the passage at once breaks down. If our Lord did not intend to say that on St. Peter *alone* He would build His Church, there is nothing here to justify the sovereignty of the Roman See. And yet on that point, so essential to the Roman view of the question, we have seen there is, as regards the original words, the greatest uncertainty, and the greatest variety of interpretation among those whom Rome herself would admit to be authorities on the question.

I say, unless St. Peter be the rock in this

* For instance, Origen (in Matt. xvi.) says: "If thou thinkest that the Church was founded upon Peter alone, what wilt thou say of John the son of Thunder, and of each of the Apostles?"

St. Cyprian (De Unitate Eccles.): "The other Apostles *were certainly what Peter was, endowed with an equal share of honour and power.*"

St. Jerome (in Jovin. i. 14): "You say that the Church is founded upon Peter, but the same in another place is done upon all the Apostles."

St. Basil (in Isaiam ii. p. 869): "The Church has been built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets. Peter also was *one of the mountains*, upon which rock also the Lord did promise to build His Church."

passage the Roman argument breaks down. But it by no means follows that if he be the rock, the Roman interpretation stands. Granting that the rock means St. Peter, and St. Peter alone, there still remains another question—what is meant by *being built on him*? For those words may have other meanings besides that assigned by Rome—that to St. Peter and his successors was therein committed the sovereignty of the Church. “St. Peter,” says an ancient Father*, “is called the Rock because he laid among the nations the foundations of the faith.” And St. Basil† speaks of him as having for the excellency of his faith received the charge of building the Church. This is at least quite a possible interpretation, and here, therefore, is a further uncertainty as to the application of the words.

There is yet another difficulty—which seems to me the greatest of all. Even granting that St. Peter is the rock, and he alone; granting that by promising to build the Church on him our Lord meant to bestow on St. Peter nothing less than sovereignty over the Church; there still remains the wide question, what there is in these words to show that the power promised to St. Peter was to descend upon his successors,

* St. Ambrose de Sanctis, Serm. 2. The authorship of this sermon is not certain, but if not St. Ambrose’s, it is the work of a writer of his age, and shows that the opinion existed.

† Contra Eunom. lib. 2.

or if upon his successors at all, why exclusively upon those in the See of Rome? When Christ our Lord commissioned His Apostles, the words which He employed clearly indicate that the powers He bestowed on them were not to be confined to themselves: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." These were commands which they could not in their own persons fully obey, and which it therefore devolved upon their successors to carry out, as by them also was inherited the promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." But in the promise made to St. Peter, there is not a word to show that the privilege granted as a reward of Peter's personal faith was to extend beyond Peter himself; that a bishop appointed by him was to have a whit more power than a bishop appointed by any other Apostle. The Archbishop of Canterbury, like every Metropolitan, has authority over the other bishops of his province, but a priest ordained by him is not a whit more a priest than one ordained by any other bishop. A peerage granted by the Sovereign does not descend to the heirs unless it is expressed in the patent. And so in the grant to St. Peter,—whatever powers it conveyed, there is nothing to show that they did not terminate with himself, or that whatever pre-eminence he personally enjoyed was to be inherited by his successors over the other bishops of the Church.

But once more ; even if the case were otherwise, and a primacy over the whole Church was intended to be held in direct descent from the Prince of the Apostles, there would still remain a further question, by which among the bishops appointed by St. Peter that primacy was to be held ? It cannot be but that the great Apostle in his missionary labours should have planted other Churches, and instituted other bishops besides those of Rome. Indeed, we know from ecclesiastical history that he was some time at Antioch, and had oversight of that Church, the bishops of which, of whom the martyr Ignatius was second, counted their succession from him *. Now, if the privileges of St. Peter were to be inherited by his successors, why were they to be enjoyed by the Bishops of Rome more than any other bishop of his appointment ? If the clergy ordained by the Metropolitan ranked above the other clergy of the province, what right would that give to one particular clergyman to claim pre-eminence above them all ?

The fact that St. Peter was martyred at Rome would reasonably cause him to be remembered there with especial reverence and affection ; but that would be wholly insufficient to give precedence as of Divine right to the bishop of that

* Jerome, Comment in Ep. ad Galat. c. ii. The Church of Antioch is said to bear to this day the name of the See of St. Peter. He is also claimed (Euseb. Eccl. Hist. ii. c. 25) as co-founder with St. Paul of the Corinthian Church.

See. Especially if we remember that whatever hand St. Peter had in founding or settling the Church of Rome, it was certainly not his work alone, but in union with St. Paul; that the two Apostles jointly are regarded in ancient writers as the founders of that Church, and that therefore the exclusive prerogative of St. Peter would be less likely to be found at Rome.

Such are the questions which arise on an examination of this important text. All these must be satisfactorily answered before the Roman interpretation of it can be justified. So long as *one* of these points remains fairly doubtful it is sufficient to invalidate the claim. How much more when all are open questions, on which the probability at least is on the other side? And this warrant, so ambiguous and obscure, is the Roman Pontiff's best title to his possessions. On this he claims of us, on pain of damnation, to acknowledge him as "Father of Christianity" and "Sovereign of the Church," and to rest with infallible certainty on his decrees.

I said that these points were open questions, on which the probability was on the other side. Let us look for a moment beyond the passage itself, to the external evidence as to its meaning, afforded by the rest of the New Testament.

If those words of our Divine Lord were really intended to convey to St. Peter the sovereignty claimed by his successors in the Roman See, is

it not morally certain that they would have been understood in that sense by those in whose presence they were spoken? Must not the Apostles from that moment have regarded St. Peter as their destined chief, and stayed all questionings with the acknowledgment of their Master's will? While He was still among them, could there have been any question of precedence when it must have been settled once for all by the prerogative bestowed on Peter? And after His departure, would they not have hastened to carry into effect their Master's dispositions, and give to their appointed chief the place and honour which was promised? Is not this what might fairly and reasonably be expected, nay, *demand*ed, as a necessary evidence that the grant to St. Peter was such as is asserted? Now turn to the New Testament, and see what traces you can find of such a position. Can any thing be plainer than that if the Roman Pontiff rests his claim on the grant of Christ our Lord to St. Peter, we ought to find that Apostle occupying the same place among his brother Apostles that the Pope claims among all the bishops of the world? And can it for a moment be pretended that this is the case? A certain priority we do find to have been exercised by that Apostle both before and after the words of the text were spoken. As he was first to confess Christ while on earth, so was he first to proclaim Him to the

world. He first proposes the election of another Apostle to fill the place of the traitor *. He on the day of Pentecost, after the descent of the Holy Ghost, is the spokesman of the heaven-gifted band, and delivers that moving address under which three thousand were added to the Church †. He was chosen to deliver to the Gentile Cornelius the message of salvation, thus opening the door of faith to all the nations of the world. And yet, about the same time we find him *sent* with St. John by the other Apostles to Samaria ‡—imagine any one daring to send the Bishop of Rome! We find his conduct with respect to Cornelius called in question by the Christians at Jerusalem §, who, if St. Peter were then, as his successors at Rome claim now to be, infallible, could not surely have doubted about his acts. We find at the council held at Jerusalem, described in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts, a council which has generally been regarded as the type of all the after synods of the Church, the chief place held not by St. Peter but St. James ||. And for all the rest of the Apostolic history, when the Gospel is carried to Rome itself and those countries most nearly connected with it, the most prominent figure, the chief labourer in the work of evangelizing the world, is not St. Peter but St. Paul.

* Acts i. 15.

† Ibid. ii. 14.

‡ Ibid. viii. 14.

§ Ibid. xi. 2.

|| Ibid. xv. 13.

The evidence from the Epistles is equally clear. In all those of St. Paul, one of which is addressed to the Church which was to rule the world, there is, with two exceptions, not a word of the Prince of the Apostles, or of the supremacy to be enjoyed by his successors. I say, with two exceptions, and those are strong testimonies on the other side. In the first Epistle to the Corinthians* St. Paul reproves those who said, "I am of Cephas;" who ranged themselves under St. Peter, and made use of his name as a title of division—and what else are Romanists doing now? And in the second chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians, St. Peter is spoken of in a way still more inconsistent with the Roman claims. He is mentioned second among the three Apostles "who seemed to be pillars†," the first place being again given to St. James. In the conference between him and St. Paul, it is arranged that the Gospel of the Circumcision, i. e. the preaching to the Jews, should be given to St. Peter, while the Gentile world, far the larger and more important share, including Rome itself, is entrusted to St. Paul. And lastly, it is mentioned of him by his brother Apostle‡ that on coming to Antioch he was guilty of an act of weakness and inconsistency, so that St. Paul felt it his duty to withstand and rebuke him to his face, because he was to be blamed. Surely that painful fact must have been for

* 1 Cor. i. 12.

† Gal. ii. 9.

‡ Gal. ii. 11.

this very reason recorded—to guard us against attributing any undue authority to that great Apostle. Is it possible that either St. Peter can have acted, or St. Paul behaved to him, as he did, if all the while he knew him to be the Prince and Ruler of the Church, in whom and his successors for ever after the Divine promise of infallibility was centred? Is it possible that this can have been the intention of our Divine Lord's promise when, I do not merely say, so little trace of it appears, but when appearances are so much against it in the Apostolic writings, or that the first records of the Apostolic Church should give so little testimony to an arrangement on which, according to Rome, the Church itself was built?

It will not do to attempt to draw a distinction between individual and official acts. We know that the Sovereignty and Infallibility claimed for the Roman Pontiff respect his official and not his personal character. But that authority claimed for the Bishop of Rome is founded on the alleged *personal* pre-eminence given to St. Peter over his brother Apostles. To find, therefore, the inspired records of the Apostolic Church utterly inconsistent with such supposed pre-eminence is in all reason fatal to the pretensions of the Roman See. Neither will it avail to contend, as some recent defenders of the Papacy have done*, that the supremacy

* As, for instance, Dr. Newman, in his Essay on Development.

was then *latent*, out of sight, and not yet developed. If the supremacy of St. Peter existed at all, it must have been known and acknowledged by the Apostles. If that supremacy has any rightful foundation, it can be none other than the word of Christ Himself. If the words of Christ are doubtful, if the witness of the Apostolic writings is on the whole decidedly against the supposition that any such pre-eminence was ascribed to or exercised by St. Peter in his own lifetime upon earth, the scriptural foundation for the Papal supremacy breaks down altogether, and the awful claims of the Roman See have no better warrant than its own assertion.

I the more earnestly invite your attention, brethren, to this point, not only because it is on this that the question mainly turns, but also because it is a question which each one of us, thank God, can examine for himself. The evidence from Church history for and against the Papacy, though by no means doubtful, is not within the reach of the majority of people. It covers a good deal of ground, it requires a good many authorities to be consulted, and those who are unable to examine for themselves, are necessarily obliged to depend on the statements and report of others. But the evidence from the Word of God, to which, with all Christians, the ultimate appeal must be, is such as all can weigh and understand. Take

the New Testament, and consult it for yourself; consider the different possible interpretations of our Divine Lord's words, and which of them is most in accordance with the rest of the inspired writings. If you can believe that the Apostles held the same view of the authority given to St. Peter that is now claimed for his alleged successor in the See of Rome, do not hesitate to submit to him. But if you cannot but admit that the evidence on this point is at least doubtful and uncertain, do not be terrified by the high pretensions and terrible denunciations of Rome to rely on what has so weak a foundation, lest, seeking to build upon Peter, you be found not built upon Christ.

LECTURE III.

IMAGE WORSHIP AND INVOCATION OF SAINTS.

1 TIM. ii. 5.

“There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men,
the man Christ Jesus.”

IN the last Lecture we considered the subject of the Supremacy claimed by the Bishop of Rome, and found reason to believe the two following propositions to be true—

First, That it is absolutely necessary, in order to justify the pretensions of the Roman See, that a clear warrant should be found for them in the words of Christ Himself, or the writings of the Apostles. Secondly, That the evidence on this point from the Gospels and the Apostolic writings, is wholly insufficient to support those pretensions.

It would be an interesting and useful, though not a necessary, occupation to proceed to examine the other evidence on this subject contained in the history of the Church and the works of ancient Christian writers. And such

an examination would, I am persuaded, only confirm the conclusion at which we have arrived, that the grounds on which the Papal claims are founded are utterly insufficient to support them.

On this investigation, however, I do not intend to enter. I only offer one or two observations as to what I believe would be the result in brief at which we should arrive*.

The first is, That it is not to be denied that a certain pre-eminence and authority was possessed by the Bishop of Rome from very early times. Secondly, That this pre-eminence was very different from the universal authority now claimed, and that it only gradually and in the course of ages attained its present dimensions: Thirdly, That whatever pre-eminence may have been enjoyed by the Bishop of Rome in ancient times, was not founded on any Divine right, was not claimed as of Divine right, but can be fully accounted for on other grounds: viz. 1. *The Civil pre-eminence* belonging to the city of Rome as capital of the empire† and

* See note at the end of the Lecture, p. 61.

† One of the Canons of the Fourth General Council, that of Chalcedon (A.D. 451), distinctly alleges this as the ground of the pre-eminence conceded to the See of Rome: "To the throne (i. e. the See) of Elder Rome (so called to distinguish it from Constantinople, which was called New Rome), *because that city is the Imperial city*, the Fathers have reasonably conceded the chief place." This passage may also be fairly regarded as fixing the sense of other passages in earlier writers, e. g. that

metropolis of the world. 2. The reverence attaching to the Church of Rome as founded by the two great Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, as the scene of their martyrdom; and as being in fact the only one among the Western Churches which could claim an Apostle for its founder*.

I now proceed to another branch of our inquiry, viz. an examination of some of the specially distinctive doctrines of the Church of Rome by the light of Holy Scripture and the teaching of the early Church. I am aware that Romanists in general object to any such inquiry. They would have the whole controversy confined to the question of the Supremacy, on which it principally turns. They claim of us to receive these doctrines without inquiry, on the mere authority of the Church and in

of Irenæus (often quoted by Romanists), "*ad hanc Ecclesiam, propter potentiores principalitatem necesse est omnem Ecclesiam convenire.*" "To this Church," i. e. the Church of Rome, "on account of its more powerful sway" (the original Greek was probably *δυνατώτεραν ἀρχήν*), "it is necessary," or (as Canon Wordsworth translates it), "it is *matter of course*," that every Church should repair. Here the words, "more powerful sway," no doubt refer to the *political* power of Rome, which gave the See of Rome a certain pre-eminence. So also that of St. Cyprian, Ep. 55, "*Romana Ecclesia, Ecclesia principalis,*" are probably to be translated, "The Roman Church is the Imperial Church." Thus, at least, Rigaltius explains it: "*id est Urbe Principali Constituta,*" i. e. established in the Imperial city.

* See Tertull. de Præscript. xiv. 36.

dependence on the infallibility of the Holy See, and resist any investigation of them, as beside the question.

This is not, however, a fair way of dealing. If it were proved that the infallible authority claimed by the Pope does of right belong to him, it would then no doubt be our duty to receive without question all that he enjoins. But while the question of the Papal claims is still under consideration, it is perfectly fair to take into account other matters involved in it, as furnishing additional evidence in the case. If the Church of Rome required us to believe nothing but what was agreeable to Holy Scripture and the faith of the early Church, it would no doubt form a strong presumption in favour of her claims. But if the contrary is the case, and doctrines and practices allowed and sanctioned by the authority of the Roman See can be shown to be clearly repugnant to the teaching of Scripture, and unknown to the earliest and purest ages, we have in this fact an additional argument against the authority which enjoins them.

“The tree is known by its fruits.” If Divine guidance and infallibility had been granted to the Roman Pontiff, it is in the highest degree improbable that his teaching would be inconsistent with that of our Lord and His Apostles. And on the other hand, if, forsaking the firm ground of Scripture and primitive tradition,

the Church of Rome has entrusted herself entirely to the guidance of her earthly Head, in blind confidence that the boat of Peter could never go astray*, what more probable than that thinking to stand, she should have fallen, that abandoning chart and compass, and relying only on her human Pilot, she should have been allowed to drift into the quicksands of error, to the "great hurt and damage not only of the ship, but of" the "lives" of those who sail with her?

And this seems all the more likely to be the case if the errors into which the Church of Rome appears to have fallen are precisely such as we should expect, from what we know in other cases to be the natural disposition of mankind. It would not be the first time in the world's history that man possessed of Divine truth, but trusting to his own guidance, has perverted the original revelation which was made to him. Again and again has this occurred in the history, not only of the human race in general, but also of God's chosen people. And what is specially remarkable, those perversions of original truth have generally been in the same direction.

The human mind with respect to the knowledge of God is liable to the two opposite

* It was the Council of Sardica, under Julius I., that first sanctioned appeals to Rome. The very next Pope (Liberius) subscribed to the Arian creed of Sirmium.

extremes, of unbelief on the one hand and superstition on the other. And whereas unbelief shows itself in keeping God out of sight, and refusing to acknowledge Him as He has revealed Himself, the way in which superstition acts is in extending Divine attributes and honours to other objects beside God—in fact, in various forms of *idolatry*. And it is to this extreme that men in general are most prone. Unbelief, the denial of the supernatural, is the besetting sin of a civilized and intellectual age; but it is not, at least in the early ages of the world, and especially among the races to whom God's revelations have been committed, a natural temptation to man. Man's natural bent lies in the opposite direction, and leads him to the various forms of idolatry and superstition by which God's truth has been defaced. It is only in recoiling from these that he falls into unbelief. So it was in the infancy of the human race, when, losing sight of God as manifested in His works and in His early dealings with mankind, they "worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things *." So it was with God's chosen people in the wilderness, when, because His prophet

* Rom. i. 25. 23.

was withdrawn from them, and the signs of the Divine presence were shrouded in mystery and gloom, trusting themselves to their Ecclesiastical head*, they fell, in their craving for a visible God, even at the foot of Sinai, to the idolatry of the golden calves. We know how often the same error was repeated in the history of the Jewish Church. In their journeyings in the wilderness, with the punishment of their first apostasy fresh in their minds, they "took up the tabernacle of Moloch and the star of their god Remphan †." After their settlement in the land of promise, through indulging in forbidden intercourse with the nations around them, they continually perverted their pure and holy faith with the idol-worship of Phenicia and Canaan. To any one who had not observed the inveterate tendency of the human mind to idolatry and superstition, it would seem impossible to explain these continual apostasies of the people of Israel, till, through the destruction of their city and sanctuary, and the seventy years' captivity in Babylon, they were thoroughly purged of their sin. And when by the mercy of God in later times, a still fuller revelation was granted to man, and in the person of the Only-begotten Son the Infinite God was manifest in substance of our flesh, and offered to our adoration as the true Image of the Father; when

* See Stanley on the Jewish Church.

† Acts vii. 43.

through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit a communication of Divine truth was bestowed on the Church such as made all previous knowledge seem but twilight; if even in the Church of Christ corruptions should have arisen,—“the Faith once delivered to the saints” should have been perverted in the same direction, and practices savouring at least of the *spirit of idolatry* have grown up and prevailed within the Spiritual Israel,—what is it but another instance of the same inveterate tendency of the human spirit; another example how hard it is for the bright and precious jewel of Divine Truth to be kept bright and unsullied in the corrupt heart of man, and a solemn warning against one at least of the dangers to which even Christians are exposed?

It will hardly be pretended that the solemn prohibitions of the First and Second Commandments are less binding upon Christians than they were upon the Jews, or that the fearful denunciations of idolatry in every form with which the pages of the Old Testament abound, have been bequeathed without purpose to the later ages of the world. Indeed, there can be little doubt that the obligation upon us is in some respects stricter than before. Not only has the Commandment, under the teaching of the Holy Ghost, been widened to forbid all kinds of spiritual idolatry—the loving, serving, regarding any thing more than God—but the

revelation of the Divine Nature which the Gospel conveys to us involves a special duty of worshipping Him as He has revealed Himself, and in that way alone, and takes away all excuse for transgressing that duty. The mystery of the Incarnation, by which the Unseen God is manifested in the person of the Only-begotten Son, by meeting that craving which man has ever felt to come face to face with his Maker has multiplied the guilt of seeking Him in any other way. And if the Almighty of His infinite condescension has provided a means by which, through His Only Son becoming man, a perfect chain of mediation should be established between heaven and earth,—by which man should gain access to God, and all spiritual blessings descend from God to man; to use that Channel of approach, and that alone, which He has appointed, must be a duty as binding upon man as to worship no other God.

- “There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” The Son of God, taking our flesh upon Him, has perfectly bridged over the chasm between us and God. Nearest to us through sharing our nature,—nearest to God through partaking of the very substance of the Godhead,—the whole work and office of mediation is fully discharged by Him, and to recognize any other being as sharing that office, to call in any other aid not expressly sanctioned by the Divine Word, or to

attempt to add any other links to the chain already perfect,—must not this be as offensive to the merciful God, as complete a transgression of His commandment, as to add any other object of worship to that only one which is Himself, and to “have other Gods beside Him?”

Nothing can be clearer than the apprehension of this duty in the first ages of the Church. While the Christian faith in its progress through the world was battling with heathenism and all its corruptions, nothing could be more complete than its witness,—more earnest than its protest, against the manifold forms of idolatry with which it was surrounded.

The addressing any kind of worship to any being beside the one true God, the giving any religious reverence to any visible image or symbol, even the admitting pictures or images into churches, was in the eyes of the early Church as great an abomination as it was in the eyes of the most faithful Jews*. It has

* Clemens Alexandrinus (*Prophet. ad Gentes*) says: “We are plainly forbidden to exercise that deceitful art,” i.e. of making images. A canon of the Council of Eliberis, in Spain, held in the reign of Constantine, decrees, “That there ought not to be pictures in churches; that objects of worship may not be painted on walls” (*Concil. Elib. cap. 6*).

Epiphanius, A.D. 370, in a letter to John, Bishop of Jerusalem, relates that going through the village of Anablatha, in Palestine, he found there a veil hanging before the door of a church, whereon was painted the image of Christ or of some Saint. When he saw in the church of Christ an image of a

been asserted *, and I believe can be proved, that no word indicative of the Invocation of Saints can be found in any Christian writer for the first 360 years after Christ. And the use of images is not heard of till a still later period. Beginning from about that time, and gradually, as is the case with every corruption, advancing to continually higher degrees, the Invocation and Worship of Saints and Angels on the one hand, and the use of Images on the other, has become an integral portion of the system of the Church of Rome, sanctioned by Popes and Councils, incorporated into her public services, and still more widely promoted by her authorized teachers, till it has reached such a pitch as to defy the powers of any fair observer to point out the difference between the idolatry of Romanist Christians and the idolatry of heathens of old.

This may seem a hard saying, yet is it

man, contrary to the authority of Scripture, he rent it, and gave counsel to the keepers of the church that it should be made a winding-sheet for some poor man.

St. Ambrose (*de fugâ Sæc.* cap. 5) says : " The Church knows nothing of the various forms of images, but only knows the true Substance of the Trinity." St. Jerome (*in Ezech.* cap. 16) : " We worship but One Image, 'The Image of the Invisible God,' " i.e. Christ (*vol. i.* 15).

St. Augustine (*De Fide et Symbol.* cap. 7) says that it is wickedness to erect such an image (as represents God in the likeness of man) in a Christian church.

* See Archbishop Ussher's Answer to a Jesuit, p. 379 of the first edition.

more than the truth? If the Scriptures are to be believed, it is idolatry to give religious honour to any visible image or symbol, and to give to any created being any reverence or worship that is due to God alone. The Council of Trent* enjoins that the images of Christ, of the Blessed Virgin, and of the Saints, are to be retained in Churches, and due honour and veneration given them. And though this is there explained to be owing not to the images themselves but to that which they represent (even as enlightened heathens protested that they worshipped not the idol itself, but the Deity of which it was an image), yet what is this but the sin which the Second Commandment forbids, of worshipping even the true God under any visible likeness†? So that even if it stopped there it would be hard indeed to justify the practice. But indeed it does not stop there. Later Romanist divines “have taught unchecked, that *to the images of Christ*

* Sess. xxv. De Invocatione Sanctorum et Sanctis Imaginibus.

† “No heathen people believed the image to be their God. They prayed not to the image, but to the God whom the image was meant to represent. Nay, the golden calves of Jeroboam were doubtless meant only as symbols of the power of Jehovah, and the people, in bowing down before them, thought they worshipped the gods ‘which brought them out of the land of Egypt’ (1 Kings xxviii.). But this is the very essence of idolatry, not to worship God in spirit and in truth, but to worship Him through the medium of an image or representation.”—The Bishop of Ely on the Thirty-Nine Articles, Art. XXII.

was due the same supreme worship as to Christ Himself ;”* and that the veneration paid to them *was due to the images themselves, and not only in respect of what they represented* †. What the practice thus sanctioned by the Church becomes among her unlearned members, without any restraint on the part of their teachers, any one who has witnessed the devotions of the poor in Roman Catholic countries, or still more of converts from heathenism to Roman Catholic Christianity, could give melancholy witness ‡.

Again, the Council of Trent declares§, “That the saints reigning with Christ offer up their

* The Bishop of Ely on the Thirty-Nine Articles. See also Ussher’s Answer to a Jesuit, who quotes Thomas Aquinas and others to this effect.

† See Bellarmine, quoted in the Bishop of Ely on the Articles.

‡ Nothing that is here said should be construed into a disapproval of the employment of Sculptures and Paintings in churches at the present time. To forbid this, is to banish Christian Art from our churches, and refuse it the highest and worthiest sphere in which it can be exercised.

It is the “worshipping and adoration” only “of Images” that the Church of England forbids. And though the Early Church may wisely have gone further, and excluded likenesses pictured or sculptured from the Sanctuary, it does not follow that any such danger exists in our time. For, as is ably argued by Dean Milman (*Latin Christianity*, vol. ii., p. 149), the danger of idolatrous use of artistic representations is continually diminished by the advance of knowledge and civilization, the spread of true and spiritual religion, and not least, by the progress and higher development of Art itself.

§ Concil. *Trident.* Sess. xxv. De Invocatione Sanctorum.

prayers to God for men; that it is good and useful to invoke them as suppliants, and to have recourse to their prayers to obtain favour from God; and that it is impious to deny that this is the case." Now, although nothing is enjoined here but the mere invoking the prayers of the saints—the calling on them to intercede for us—yet, even supposing the practice went no farther than this, it will not be difficult to show that what is here sanctioned is unreasonable in itself, wholly unwarranted by Scripture, and closely verging on that sin which we know to be displeasing to God.

In the first place, to invoke the saints in the other world, takes for granted that they hear us; which is at least utterly uncertain. For in order that any saint in Paradise should hear the prayers addressed to him on earth, he must not only be conscious of what is passing here, which it is doubtful if any of the departed are; but, forasmuch as invocations may be addressed to him in many different places at the same time, to hear them all it is needful he should possess something of the Divine attribute of omnipresence, or the power of being in different places at the same time. Romanists have met this difficulty by supposing* that the prayers of men on earth are communicated to the

* See "A Papist Misrepresented and Reprerented," by the late Dr. Challoner, p. 16.

Saints by God, in order that they may intercede for them with God; in other words, that an application intended to reach through a Saint to Almighty God, *first passes through God to the Saint, in order that from the Saint it may come to Him again*, a supposition which, besides being entirely gratuitous, is surely absurd.

But further; supposing the saints to hear the prayers of men, is it lawful to address them? Granting, what there is no reason to doubt, that God's holy ones in heaven do remember those whom they have left on earth, and plead with Him on their behalf, are we justified in asking their prayers? Whether *lawful* or not, it can hardly be *needful* if the office of Christ our Lord, as the one Mediator between God and man, be such as Scripture describes it. The common illustration by which the practice is defended is to this effect. Supposing, it is said, you wanted something of the King, and you had one or more friends at court whose interest might be useful to you, would you not apply to them to beg their advocacy in your behalf? But this illustration fails in a principal point to represent the true state of the case. Suppose the King's son had come to the place where you dwell, and you had been brought to know him. Suppose on his departure he had given you a promise that if ever you wanted to obtain any thing of his Father and applied to him, he

would intercede in your behalf. Suppose he had given you conclusive proof of his goodwill towards you, and of the power of his influence with the King; would you hesitate to use so powerful an advocacy—would you dream of using any other than his? Would you, whatever other friends you had at court, care to apply to them when the Prince, your best friend, had offered you his help? Nay, would you not fear, unless he had told you to the contrary, that he might be offended at your asking any one else? And should not the same fear deter us, if we have the all-prevailing advocacy of the Son of God in heaven, from daring to think of any other intercessor than Him? True, we ask our brethren to pray for us, i. e. to join their prayers to ours—it would be of little use if we did not also pray for ourselves. But when the intercession of Christ is promised us, and we are invited to use it, to spend a breath in asking the help of our glorified fellow-creatures, when it is utterly uncertain whether they hear us or not, and doubtful also, at the least, whether by so doing we do not encroach on the office of the one Mediator between God and man, and so displease our best Friend—surely folly is the mildest term one can apply to such a practice.

We have hitherto regarded the invocations addressed to the saints as confined to asking their intercession, and not as assuming the cha-

racter of worship addressed to the saints themselves. But a little observation of the devotions in actual use in the Church of Rome will satisfy us that they are by no means confined to the former character, but are to a great degree of the latter. They are so at least in one notable instance, in the devotions addressed to the Blessed Virgin. It is a painful task to expose the errors of our brethren, and especially to censure expressions uttered doubtless in a religious spirit. And in entering on this branch of our subject let us first endeavour to clear ourselves of any wish or intention to deny any portion of due honour and reverence to Her whom "all generations shall call blessed," and whom all Christians can only rightly regard as favoured by the Almighty beyond all other daughters of Eve, as one who for the high honour put upon her, and for the singular holiness of which she is an example, should ever stand forth as an object both of our reverence and imitation. And yet in considering what is recorded in Scripture concerning the Blessed Virgin, one cannot but be struck with the reflection how very little that is. After the great events of the Annunciation and the Nativity, in which of course she held a conspicuous part, and in respect to which also her behaviour is noticed as keeping all these things and pondering them in her heart*, there is next to nothing men-

* Luke ii. 19.

tioned about her. Once or twice only does she again appear upon the scene of the sacred history, and of the few places in which she is mentioned, two certainly exhibit our Divine Lord as rather checking than encouraging any special consideration towards her.

The words He addressed to her on the occasion of the miracle at Cana, cannot rightly be understood as other than a gentle rebuke of her interference*; and when, on another occasion†, our Lord, being informed that His mother and brethren desired to speak with Him, pointed to His disciples, and said that whosoever should do the will of God should be to Him as His mother; it does not certainly look like a wish to place her in any special pre-eminence among His friends. Besides these occasions, her presence at the Cross, when she was committed by our dying Lord to St. John‡, and among the disciples after the Ascension§, is all that is mentioned about her. In none of the Apostolic

* St. Augustine (De Symbolo) says on that text: "That He might distinguish between the Godhead and Manhood, because as man He was inferior and subject to her, but as God He was above all, He saith, 'What have I to do with thee?' Or, because our Lord, in that He was God, *had no mother*, as man He had; but the miracle which He was going to work, He would work as God and not as man. As if He had said, 'The God-head which works miracles in Me is not the offspring of thy womb.'"

† Matt. xii. 46.

‡ John xix. 26, 27.

§ Acts i. 14.

writings does her name occur, and, it is needless to add, not a single word can be adduced from them to justify the honours paid her by a large portion of the Church. The earliest notice in Church history of any thing like worship addressed to the Blessed Virgin, is connected with the Collyridians, an insignificant sect of women in the middle of the fourth century, who offered cakes to the Virgin at a certain time every year, for which they are rebuked, among other heretics of the time, by the Bishop and Church historian Epiphanius, in the following terms*: “What Scripture hath delivered any thing concerning this? Which of the prophets have permitted a man to be worshipped, much less a woman? Let Mary be in honour, but let the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost be worshipped—*let no man worship Mary.*”

But though thus rebuked in the bud, the error soon revived and spread in the Church. Supported in great measure by an erroneous translation in the Vulgate of the angelic salutation †, where, “Hail, thou that art highly favoured,” is rendered, “Hail, thou that art full of grace;”—strengthened in the fifth cen-

* Contra Hæres. 79, p. 448.

† χαριτωμένη. “*gratiâ cumulata*” (Valcknaer), *especially graced or favoured* by God (Mede), is translated in the Vulgate, “*Gratiâ plena,*” *full of grace*, as if the Blessed Virgin were not the *object* of Divine favour, but the *source*.

ture by the tradition which then first appeared of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin into heaven; a tradition of which the uncertain and slender foundation makes it utterly unworthy of belief*. It began with prayers to the Almighty *by virtue of the Virgin's intercession*, such as that in the Roman Breviary†, "We beseech Thee, O Lord, let the glorious intercession of the blessed ever Virgin Mary protect us and bring us to life eternal;" then proceeded to prayers *directly addressed to her*, though still for her intercession, as "Blessed Mother," "Virgin undefiled," "Glorious Queen of Heaven," intercede for us with the Lord‡;—invoking her as the Gate of Heaven, Refuge of Sinners, Queen of Angels and of Saints§; and then, not stopping there, but advancing to further degrees of worship, it extended to prayers, and, not prayers only, but praises addressed to the Virgin herself, speaking of her as a source of grace and blessing, as sharing power and glory with her Divine Son, as able to command Him in behalf of her suppliants||, and even to "calm the anger

* The Assumption was first distinctly asserted by Gregory, Bishop of Tours, in the end of the sixth century. His account, by the confession of the Benedictine editor of his works, is drawn from a document acknowledged to be apocryphal.

† Brev. Rom. Sermon. clv.

‡ Ibid. Autumn. cxliv.

§ Litanie Lauritanie. Quest. ccxix.

|| Among the favourite addresses to the Virgin occurs the expression, "Show that thou art a mother" (Sermon. cliii.), i. e.

of thy heavenly Husband *!" so that whereas the blessed God is set forth in an aspect of terror, it is from the Virgin that mercy is to be obtained, and sinners who think themselves "aggrieved by Divine justice" are exhorted to come to Mary for redress †, till the very work of redemption seems attributed as much to her as to God ‡. And then begins a further stage of blasphemy. A day in every week, a month in every year, is kept in her honour. Hymns are offered to her praise, and not hymns only, but the very Psalms which David and others, under inspiration of the Holy Ghost, addressed to the Almighty, are taken, and the Name of God being erased, the name of Mary is inserted in Its stead; as for instance, "In thee, O Lady, have I trusted, let me never be confounded." "Into thy hands, O Lady, I commend my spirit." "Let Mary arise, let her enemies be scattered." "Out of the depths have I called to thee, O Lady. O Lady, hear my voice." And then, adapting in the same way the

according to the interpretation given by Cardinal De Perron, "Use the authority of a mother over thy Son."

* Nouveau Recueil de Cantiques à l'usage des Confréries des Paroisses de Paris, 1839.—Hymn on the Assumption, p. 183.

† Bernardinus, De Bustis Mariale, Part iii. Sermon. 2, p. 176. Cologne, 1607.

‡ In the office of the Virgin for Saturdays in the month of June occurs the passage, "Grievously did one man and one woman injure us: but thanks be to God not the less by *one man and one woman* are all things restored."

one hundred and forty-eighth Psalm, "Praise our Lady of heaven: glorify her in the highest. Praise her, sun and moon, ye stars and circles of the planets." "*Let every thing that hath breath praise our Lady.*"

This is what the Church of Rome allows and sanctions*.

If this be not blasphemy, what is? If this be not idolatry, what is? Can these be worshippers of Him who said, "I am the Lord thy God, thou shalt have none other Gods but Me†?" "My glory will I not give to another." Can these be disciples of that faith which is summed up in the text, "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus?"

And this claims to be the one pure and perfect form of Christianity in the world, enjoined on our acceptance on peril of condemnation by the thunders of the Holy See. For this we are called to exchange our pure and Apostolic

* These last quotations are from the Psalter of Cardinal Bonaventura, who lived in the thirteenth century, and was, two hundred years after, canonized as a saint; his writings having been commended by more than one subsequent Pope. Sixtus IV., in the bull of canonization, declares that he (Bonaventura) so wrote on Divine subjects that the Holy Spirit seems to have spoken by him. Sixtus V. pronounced him an acknowledged Doctor of Holy Church, and directed his authority to be cited in all places of education, and in all ecclesiastical discussions and studies.

† Exod. xx. 2, 3. Isa. xlii. 8.

faith, that we may learn to trust in Mary instead of Christ, and rely for our salvation on the merits of a fellow-creature.

May God protect us, brethren, from such error. May this view of the tendencies of the Romish system guard us from being beguiled into submission to its claims. Let us, "seeing we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens*," our all-sufficient Advocate and Intercessor, "hold fast without wavering the profession of our faith;" looking only to Him, trusting only to the merit of His sacrifice and the power of His grace, and seeking more and more to be conformed to His image; (though remembering our brethren we cease not to pray instantly to Him to cleanse away the corruptions and heal the divisions of His Church,) till we, through His grace, be admitted to His heavenly kingdom and made "partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."

* Heb. iv. 14.

NOTE.

I HAVE thought it well to append a few facts of Church history bearing on the question of the Supremacy, which were yet unfit to be introduced into the text, and beyond the compass of an ordinary note.

1. Before the close of the first century Clement, third Bishop of Rome, addressed an epistle to the Corinthian Church. He speaks much of the virtues of submission, observance of Church order, &c., but not a word implying any thing like supremacy of the Roman See occurs in all the epistle. Neither do the epistles of the martyr Ignatius, one of which is addressed to the Church of Rome. It is true that in the superscription of the latter epistle he speaks of the Church as *presiding** in the city of Rome; and this passage is therefore alleged by Romanists as a testimony on their side. But an exactly similar term is used by Tertullian, *De Præscriptione* xxxvi., where he speaks of the Sees instituted by the Apostles as presiding over the places in which they are founded.

2. In the middle of the second century a controversy arose about the time of keeping Easter. The venerable Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, and a disciple of St. John, came to Rome and debated with Anicetus, then Bishop of that See, on this and other subjects. On this, however, we are told by Eusebius †, they came to no agreement, *as neither would give up to the other*, yet they separated in peace; Anicetus, in his own church, *yielding to Polycarp the office of consecrating the Eucharist*. Could St. Polycarp have regarded Anicetus as vicar of Christ and sovereign of the Church?

3. The same controversy was renewed at the close of the same century under Polycrates, Bishop of Ephesus, and Victor, Bishop of Rome. Victor, being unable to induce the Churches of Asia Minor to conform to the general practice, took the violent course of excommunicating them; but for doing this he was censured with much severity by several bishops, even

* *ἡ τις προκἀθεται.*

† Euseb. H. E. v. 24.

of those whose practice agreed with that of Rome. Among others, the famous Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons in Gaul, wrote to him strongly on the subject, taking part with the Asiatic bishops. Could he and the others who censured Victor have held the modern view of the supremacy of Rome?

4. In the beginning of the third century flourished Hippolytus, Bishop of Portus, a very learned man, some of whose works have come down to us. In one, which is generally acknowledged to be his, the Bishops of Rome, Zephyrinus and Callistus, are accused of heresy*; yet Hippolytus is regarded by the Church of Rome as a saint.

5. In the middle of the same century flourished St. Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage. His controversy with Stephen, Bishop of Rome, is well known. The African Church had in several Councils decided for the rebaptizing of heretics. The Church of Rome took the opposite view, and as the African Bishops adhered to their determination, Stephen renounced communion with them. In opening the Session of the Council of Carthage Cyprian said, *inter alia*, "No one of our brethren has constituted himself a *Bishop of Bishops*, or by tyrannical menaces attempted to bring his colleagues into compliance, since every bishop has free liberty and power of judging, and *can neither be judged by another nor judge any other himself*." There is also extant a correspondence on this subject between Cyprian and Firmilian, Bishop of the Cappadocian Cæsarea, in which both speak of Stephen's conduct in a manner utterly inconsistent with a belief in Papal supremacy. Cyprian accuses him of writing unwarily, unskilfully, with great pride, impertinence, and self-contradiction. Firmilian speaks of the Church of Rome as being no exact observer of tradition, and is indignant at the absurdity of Stephen's conduct, "that he who bears himself so high upon his station and the rank and eminence of his See, who glories in his succession to the chair of Peter, upon whom the foundations of the Church were laid, should be the person to introduce more rocks than one, and to build other Churches upon new models†." Can any thing show more

* See Milman's *Latin Christianity*, vol. i. p. 42.

† See the *Epistles of St. Cyprian*.—Ep. 75.

plainly that the claims of Rome, *though beginning to be advanced*, were not then acknowledged by the Church?

6. On another occasion, the Bishops of Africa, among whom was St. Augustine, not only did not submit to the authority of the Bishops of Rome, but in the Council of Africa denied the right of the Roman Bishop Celestinus to interfere with their jurisdiction*.

7. In the year A.D. 325 was held the great Council of Nicæa, after the Apostles' days the first General Assembly of the Church. There met on that occasion three hundred and eighteen Bishops from all parts of the Roman Empire. These were summoned by the Emperor Constantine, who also presided in person at the Synod. Among the Bishops, Hosius, of Corduba, held the chief place. The Bishop of Rome was absent from age, but was represented by two of his Presbyters. There is nothing to show that any authority whatever was claimed or exercised by him. In the subscriptions to the Creed the Roman Presbyters signed after Hosius. Yet the power of convening General Councils is held by Romanists to belong exclusively to the Pope. (See Conc. Lateran. Sess. ii. p. 152, quoted in Barrow on the Supremacy, I. cap. vi.)

8. In the year 381 was held the Second General Council, that of Constantinople. This, too, was summoned by the reigning Emperor, Theodosius; and the Bishop of Rome had so little to do with it that the Romanist historian, Baronius, himself acknowledges it to have been *held against his will*†.

9. In the year 358 a Council was held at Sirmium, in Pannonia, under the Emperor Constantius. A Creed was drawn up of a completely Arian tendency, denying the Nicene faith, and even condemning Athanasius. This Creed the ROMAN BISHOP, LIBERIUS, WAS INDUCED TO SUBSCRIBE, AND SO TO DENY THE CATHOLIC FAITH. It is true that he afterwards recanted, and bitterly repented of his error; but where was the infallibility of the See of Rome, when a Roman Bishop appeared

* See the Bishop of Ely on the Thirty-Nine Articles, Art. XXXVII., p. 819.

† Repugnante Damaso celebrata. Baron. anno 553, 224.

as an approver of heresy? Our authority for this is Athanasius himself.

10. In the seventh century arose the Monothelite heresy, i. e. the error of those who asserted that our Blessed Lord had but one will, which was in fact a more subtle form of Nestorianism. Of this heresy the Roman Bishop Honorius distinctly declared himself an advocate; he wrote a letter, which is extant, in defence of it, and for his adhesion to it was anathematized by the Sixth General Council and by his successor, Leo II. This is recorded in Acts of the Council.

11. One of the most damaging facts with respect to the Papal Supremacy is the publication and adoption of the False Decretals. Up to the latter half of the ninth century the authorized collection of the edicts of the Bishops of Rome commenced not earlier than Pope Siricius, towards the close of the fourth century. But in the time of Nicolas I. there suddenly appeared a new Code purporting to belong to the twenty earliest Popes—with many decrees and acts of Councils, all tending to the one object of the exaltation of the Roman See. They are now universally acknowledged to be entire forgeries—and upon Pope Nicolas I. rests the guilt—not, probably, of fabricating, but of adopting and incorporating them into the law of the Church and using them against his enemies *knowing them to be fabrications*. (See Milman's *Latin Christianity*, vol. ii., p. 374).

Many other facts might be added, but these are sufficient to show the nature of the witness which Church history bears on the question of the Supremacy.

LECTURE IV.

THE DOCTRINE OF PURGATORY: ITS ORIGIN, EVIDENCE, AND RESULTS.

LUKE xxiii. 43.

“Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.”

OF all the sayings of our Divine Lord upon the cross—precious as they all are—there is none more precious than this; not only because—while its significant brevity gives token of the exhaustion and agony under which it was spoken—there is a majesty in the sentence which testifies to the Divinity of the Speaker, but most of all for the witness and assurance it conveys of the power and willingness of our incarnate and suffering Lord to pardon and save all truly penitent sinners. For if in the extreme case of one who had lived in wrongdoing and the breaking of all laws human and Divine*—brought in the very “hour of

* For the character of the thieves in Judæa about this time see Josephus, Wars, Bk. II. cap. xii.

death " to repent and turn to God—the merits and love of Christ could cleanse and save from sin, we feel that we too, if we repent, may safely hope for mercy.

But though this is the chief and most precious truth derived from the words, they are also valuable in no small degree from the light they indirectly throw on a subject of the greatest interest to us all—the state of the departed in the other world.

We cannot believe—who that claims to bear the name of Christian could?—that our Divine Lord, on His awful throne of agony, could speak either ignorantly or deceitfully; we are confident that it was no mere adaptation of His words to popular notions, no promising of what He was not able to fulfil, but a solemn declaration from the Lord of Heaven and Earth—all the more solemn, all the more certain to be true, from the fact that He was at that moment offering His awful propitiation for the sins of the whole world—applicable not to that individual case only, but to all who should depart in Him, of the perfect sufficiency of His merits to take away all the guilt, to remit the entire penalty of sin. We can only regard it as an intimation such as He alone could make to whom both worlds alike were open, drawing aside for a moment the impenetrable veil that hides from our weeping eyes the passage of the departing spirit, and teaching us with supreme Divine

authority, that the souls of those who die in the faith and fear of Christ, pass, *and that immediately*, to a place of rest, refreshment, and delight, where they enjoy the presence of the Lord, and the company of His faithful servants, waiting only for the perfect consummation of the last great day, which shall unite their spirit to its glorified tabernacle, and translate them for ever into the highest bliss of Heaven.

This, and no less than this, may certainly be gathered from those solemn and most blessed words. And it is interesting to see how upon the text and other kindred passages of Scripture was built, in exact conformity with them, the faith of the early Church. Reflecting, as the Church so long as she holds firmly to the rock of Antiquity will ever reflect, as in a mirror, the teaching of the Word of God; the ancient Fathers ever taught that there is a state of happiness or misery allotted by God to every man immediately after death, according as he has been good or bad in this life, in which state they abide till the Resurrection, when they enter on final bliss or final condemnation. They spoke of the state of the good as "Paradise," or "Abraham's bosom," the "region of the godly," of those who are there as "at rest in a hidden receptacle," "in eternal rest," "in the keeping of the Lord," cherished in peaceful abodes, awaiting the day of judgment, enjoying the intercourse of angels and

holy souls, and above all, the presence of Christ, and in Him seeing God*.

Agreeably to this, in our own office at the burial of the dead, we confess that "the souls of those who depart hence in the Lord do live with God, and with Him, as soon as they are delivered from the burden of the flesh, are in joy and felicity;" we pray "that we" too "may rest in" Christ, "as our hope is our" departed "brother doth;" though we also ask for ourselves, and for "all those who are departed in the true faith of His holy name," that we "may hereafter have our perfect consummation and bliss both in body and soul in His eternal and everlasting glory."

This we may confidently assert to be the teaching of Scripture and the faith of the ancient Church as to the state of the departed. We have to see how this is declined from in the later teaching of the Church of Rome.

Next to the encroachment upon the mediatorial office of our Lord, and the grievous peril of idolatry incurred through the use of images, the invocation of saints, and the worship of the Blessed Virgin, which was treated of in the preceding Lecture, there is perhaps no point in which Rome has more flagrantly corrupted Scriptural and primitive truth, or thrown a more dismal cloud over the cheering light of the Gospel; no part of her system which has

* See note C. on Tertull. Apol. c. 47, in the Oxford Library of the Fathers.

been a more fruitful source of mischief and abuse, than the doctrine of Purgatory and the system of Indulgences which rests upon it.

It is the doctrine of the Church of Rome, as declared by the Council of Trent, that sins committed after baptism, even when remitted in the Sacrament of Penance, i. e. through confession and absolution, are not so entirely removed but that there remains a certain temporary punishment due to God on account of them, and those who have not satisfied for this by their works or their sufferings in this life must suffer for them hereafter in Purgatory.

That Purgatory is a place where the souls, not of the wicked and impenitent, but "of pious men," "of truly penitent and justified sinners," "of those who having truly repented die in the love of God *," if they "have failed to satisfy by works worthy of repentance for their sins, are confined as in a prison, and suffer purifying pains till they are fit to enter heaven." The pains there endured are declared to be "most horrible" (*atrocissimæ*), "painful in a wondrous degree †," "exceeding beyond comparison any sufferings upon earth," and "lasting apparently for thousands of years, unless by certain appointed means they are abridged."

* These expressions occur in the Catechism of the Council of Trent and the decrees of the Council of Florence, both documents of unquestionable authority.

† See Phillpotts's Letters to Butler, Letter V.

What these means are I will explain hereafter; at present we have to consider on what foundations this most appalling doctrine rests. It will not be expected that its upholders should attempt to allege Scripture in its behalf. It is astonishing to find even a few texts adduced in support of it, texts of which some might perhaps be interpreted in harmony with it if it were otherwise established, but utterly insufficient as proof, and others have clearly nothing to do with the matter. It is true that fire is spoken of occasionally as a means by which God purifies His servants, but there is every reason to believe that it is used figuratively to mean affliction; as when St. Peter bids Christians not be disturbed at "the fiery trial which is to try them, as though some strange thing happened to" them*, it is far more consistent to interpret it of the persecutions that were to come, and which we know in fact did come, upon the Churches which he addressed. The only passage of Scripture which might seem at all favourable to the doctrine is that in 1 Cor. iii. 12—15, "*Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. . . . If any man's*

* 1 Pet. iv. 12.

work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss : but he himself shall be saved ; yet so as by fire." There is no doubt that this is a difficult text, and we need not be ashamed to acknowledge it as such, when the great St. Augustine wished it to be interpreted by wiser men than himself*. Yet if we carefully examine the passage we shall see good reason to be satisfied that it is no argument in favour of purgatory.

For, first, the fire here spoken of is connected with the day of judgment, "the day shall declare it, because it shall be," doubtless on that day, "revealed by fire;" whereas, the trial of purgatory does not take place on the day of judgment, but for ages before. Again, the fire there spoken of is to *try*, not to *punish*; the fire of purgatory is entirely penal. But, above all, when we look into the passage we see at once that St. Paul is speaking not of the lives of individual men, but of the work of Apostles and other ministers of Christ. Throughout the chapter he speaks of the Church as a house and building of God, of Christ as the only foundation, of himself as an architect or master builder, of other Apostles and ministers as fellow-workers with him. The different kinds of material must therefore signify the various doctrines which the several teachers engraft upon the faith. All this, he says, shall at the

* De Fide et Operibus, c. 15.

last day be put to a searching test. That teaching which does not endure the trial, will cause harm and loss to its author, though he himself, if he has been earnest and sincere, will after all be saved, yet with peril and difficulty, as through, or out of, fire.

This I believe to be the true interpretation of the passage. It is, at all events, a possible one, and far more probable than that which supposes it to refer to a temporary suffering after death. And this is the strongest testimony that can be brought from Scripture in support of the Romish doctrine.

But if there is little in Scripture in favour of purgatory, there is a good deal against it ; quite enough to decide the question as far as Scripture is concerned. And foremost on this side we may place the words of the text.

If that declaration of our Divine Lord has any meaning, it teaches that the soul of the penitent thief did not pass through any intermediate state or place of suffering, but went that very day, which was nearly ending when He spoke, direct with Him to an abode of peace and rest.

Now it can hardly be supposed that the case of the thief was diverse from all others, that the Lord dealt with him differently from all other penitent sinners. If any man needs to suffer in order to satisfy God for his sins,

surely that felon must have needed. If purgatory be requisite in any case, surely it must have been requisite in his. What he endured upon his cross, though doubtless it was anguish enough, cannot on the Roman view have been sufficient, for it was utterly unequal to what souls are said to undergo in purgatory, which is such "that any amount of suffering here would be well worth enduring to escape it." Again, when we find St. Paul declaring that he thought it better to depart and to be with Christ; and speaking of the absence from the body as a being present with the Lord—not apparently as a condition peculiar to himself, but as the common hope of Christians—when he bids the Thessalonians not "sorrow for the dead as others that have no hope,"—who would not sorrow for friends in purgatory?—when St. John records it as a revelation from heaven, that, "blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours,"—what rest is there in purgatorial pains?—above all, when we read the blessed declaration that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from *all* sin," that "if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from *all* unrighteousness," that "there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus;" that "whosoever believeth in Him is passed from death unto life," can we doubt for a moment that the dismal notion of purgatory is "grounded

upon no warranty of Scripture, but is rather repugnant to the Word of God * ? ”

What, then, we are inclined to ask, can have been the origin of such a doctrine ? If it be not part of the original teaching of the Apostles, of which Scripture is the oldest and most authentic record, how came it to be introduced into the faith of the Church ? The answer to this question is not at all difficult, and I think will be satisfactory. Romanists, indeed, claim a high antiquity for the doctrine, for they assert that “ the existence of purgatory was taught by all the ancient Fathers and Councils.” But when we examine the grounds of the assertion we find them very insufficient. As an evidence of the existence of a belief in purgatory in the primitive Church, Romanists allege the practice of prayers for the dead. Now, that prayers for the dead were used from very early times is not to be denied. But prayers for the dead, such prayers at least as were then in use, by no means involve a belief in purgatory. The prayers for the faithful departed in the early Church were grounded on the belief then held as to their state. What that belief was we have already seen—that they were in Paradise, or Abraham’s bosom, in a place of rest and refreshment, enjoying the presence of Christ, waiting only to be perfected through reunion

* Art. XXII.

with their bodies at the Resurrection. For that final perfecting of the departed the ancient Church constantly prayed, as well as for a continuance of the blessings they believed them to be enjoying. "Remember, O Lord, Thy servants which have gone before us, and sleep in the sleep of peace." "To them, O Lord, and to all that are at rest in Christ, grant a place of refreshment, of light and peace." And again, "Give them, O Lord, eternal rest, and let light perpetual shine upon them *."

Prayers such as these imply nothing of Purgatory. The state in which the ancient Church supposed the faithful departed to be was very different from that, and this may be still more plainly shown to be the case by the fact that in the ancient prayers for the departed the highest saints were included—Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, even the Blessed Virgin, are named in the intercessions of the ancient Church—not with any idea they were in suffering, but as realizing their union with brethren in Christ, joining with them in thanksgiving for blessings received, and in prayers for other blessings in which all were interested.

If further evidence of this be needed, it may be found in the numerous expressions in ancient writers concerning the departed wholly inconsistent with a belief in Purgatory. For

* All these expressions are taken from ancient liturgies.

instance, St. Clement, Bishop of Rome, earliest of the Apostolic Fathers, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, written probably before the death of St. John the Apostle, says that they who have finished their course in charity, according to the grace of Christ, "possess the region of the godly, and shall be manifested in the visitation of Christ *," assigning but one place to the souls of all good men, and understanding it to be a safe and comfortable refuge and shelter. So Justin Martyr, in the second century, delivers it among the Catholic doctrines taught him, "that the souls of the righteous abide in a certain better region, and those of the unrighteous in an evil one †."

So Tertullian calls Paradise "a place of Divine pleasantness, appointed to receive the spirits of the saints ‡." And in another place he says that "it is *an injury to Christ* to count that those called hence by Him are in a state to be pitied (who would not pity the souls in purgatory ?), when they, like St. Paul, have obtained their desire to depart and to be with Christ §." It is true that this writer, after he joined the sect of the Montanists, expresses a different opinion ;

* St. Clem. Rom. Ep. ad Corinth.

† Dial. cum Tryph. c. 5, p. 107, quoted in Bishop Bull's sermon "On the Middle State," Works, vol. i. p. 67.

‡ Apol. c. 47.

§ De Patientia, c. 9, quoted by Archbishop Ussher, "Answer to a Jesuit," p. 164 (ed. 1624).

but at the same time bears witness to the belief of the Catholic Church being such as has been described.

St. Cyprian, in two or three places, uses language quite inconsistent with the notion of Purgatory. Quoting the words of Simeon, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant," &c., he regards it as a proof that the servants of God *then* have peace, *then* enjoy free and quiet rest when, being drawn from the storms of the world, they arrive at the haven of everlasting habitation *. The righteous, he says, are called to a refreshing, the unrighteous to torment †. And in another work ‡ he says that the end of this life being accomplished, we are divided into the habitations of either immortality or everlasting death; that when we are once departed from hence, there is no further place for repentance, nor *any effect of satisfaction*; that it is here that life is either lost or obtained. "But if, even at the very end and setting of thy temporal life, thou shouldest pray for thy sins and call upon the only true God with confession and faith, pardon is given to thee on thy confession, and saving forgiveness is granted to thee on thy belief, and at thy very death thou *hast a passage into immortality*. This grace doth Christ impart, this triumph of mercy doth He bestow."

* On the Plague, sect. 2.

† Ibid. sect. 11.

‡ Ad Demetrium, sect. 16.

sixth century, Gregory, Bishop of Rome, gave it the weight of his sanction. From that time the belief in purgatory rapidly gained ground, strengthened by a kind of evidence which has been indeed its main support, but which reasonable men would think a weak foundation for an article of faith—dreams and visions which individuals were said to have had in various places, in which an awful scene of suffering was displayed before them—a natural result, one would think, of that dismal idea when first received by weak and ardent minds. They beheld souls tortured by extreme degrees of heat and cold, and enduring other unspeakable torments, and when, asking terror-stricken what it was, they were told it was not Hell, but Purgatory.

Four hundred years after, a holy-day was appointed by the Pope, on which all were desired to pray for the souls in Purgatory. But it was not till the Council of Florence, 1439, that the doctrine was adopted as an article of faith, and those who did not believe in Purgatory were doomed to Hell.

But the authoritative promulgation of this opinion by the Church of Rome provoked at that very time a significant witness against it in the openly expressed dissent of the Eastern Churches.

The Council of Trent, 1563, re-asserted the same doctrine, and on that authority it now stands as part of the Roman Catholic faith.

Such is the history of the doctrine of Purgatory. We must say one word about the appointed means of relief from it. The Canon of the Council of Trent which declares the existence of Purgatory, adds that the souls there are assisted, i. e. the term of their suffering is shortened, by the prayers of the faithful and by the sacrifice of the altar. Of these there is no need to speak, except to call attention to the fact, first, that the prayers thus enjoined are a very different thing from those of the early Church; and secondly, that if the One Sacrifice of our Divine Lord upon the Cross has not availed to remove all suffering in the other world from those who truly repent, it is difficult to see how the commemoration of it in the Holy Sacrament can help to do so. But these are not the only means of relief. Another, still more widely used, consists of the practice of Indulgences, or, as they are called in our Twenty-second Article, "pardons." It is the doctrine of the Church of Rome, that although the great majority even of penitents have failed to satisfy God for their sins, yet some have reached such a pitch of holiness as not only to satisfy for themselves, but even to avail for others. Notwithstanding that the Scripture says "no man may deliver his brother, nor make agreement unto God for him"—"that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God"—that our Blessed Lord commands us when we have done all, to say we

are unprofitable servants, and represents the wise Virgins in the Parable as unable to supply the need of their fellows—the Church of Rome declares that the number of those who have more than fulfilled God's requirements is so large, that there exists an almost boundless treasury of the merits of Christ and of the saints available for the remission of that punishment which has else to be endured in Purgatory. Of this treasury, she further teaches, the Bishop of Rome, as Vicar of Christ, has the key, and can assign any portion of it to whomsoever he will, and on what conditions he pleases. Such a benefit is called an Indulgence, and is applied to the shortening of the term of suffering in Purgatory. The means of obtaining indulgences are various. Sometimes they are the reward of pilgrimages, of visiting particular churches, or of engaging in particular wars. A thousand years of a man's appointed term of suffering may be cancelled by one such act. But another and an easier way of obtaining such remission for oneself, or for others, is by money. And thus the sale of indulgences came to be a widely prevailing practice, and a most profitable source of revenue to the Holy See*. That it is also a source of abounding evil, abused to the advan-

* It is well known that from the sale of indulgences, promoted by the Monk Tetzels, were obtained funds for the building of St. Peter's, and that indignation at this enormous abuse first incited Luther to attack the corruptions of Rome.

tage of the rich over the poor, and as a licence to continue in sin ; and so, besides the fearful presumption that it involves, its effects are an eloquent witness against it and the whole system of which it is a part, all who hear of it can imagine, though only those who are acquainted with the practice as it has prevailed in past times, and prevails now in Roman Catholic countries, can fully know. Yet to this practice, and to the doctrine on which it is founded, every one must assent who submits to the Bishop of Rome. He must give credence to the dogma of purgatory, and look forward for himself, unless by singular merit he escapes it, to ages of suffering in its doleful shades ; he must learn to think of his friends—of those he has loved on earth, ay, and the best of them—as tortured in its fires ; he must use those means which so openly make a gain of godliness ; and that when we have the clearest evidence that it is not found in the Revelation of the Gospel, no part of “the faith once delivered to the saints,” but in the highest degree repugnant to them both, dishonouring to our Divine Lord and His all-sufficient work, enslaving the souls of men with unfounded fears, and abused to the encouragement of wrong-doing.

My brethren, if we turn with the thankfulness of one who has been haunted by a horrible vision, and awaking finds it but a dream ; thankfulness to the God of mercy who has de-

livered us in this, as in other points, from the oppressive yoke wherewith our forefathers were burdened; if we desire, as we all surely must, to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, let us beware lest we abuse it. Let us remember,—none of us remembers it as he ought,—that though there be no such place as Purgatory, there is such a place as Hell; that the same authority which leads us to reject the one, obliges us to believe in the other. Let us beware how we give heed to the speculations of modern sceptics, who, drawing their inspiration from the same sources from which this mischievous error overspread the Church, would dare to commute the dread future punishment of the wicked to a Purgatory like that of Rome.

Concerning the unseen world and the future state of man, our only teacher must be the Word of God. That Word clearly instructs us that this present life is the time of trial, the other of retribution; this of working, that of rewarding; that to those who truly repent, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and amend their lives, all sins whatsoever are fully and freely pardoned; but to those who sin and repent not, there remains nothing but “a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation,” “a worm” that “dieth not,” and “a fire” that “never shall be quenched.”

LECTURE V.

THE CATHOLIC DOCTRINE OF THE EUCHARIST DISTINGUISHED FROM TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

1 COR. xi. 23—27.

“The Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took bread: and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is My body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of Me. After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in My blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.”

THE feelings of diffidence and reluctance with which I have entered on every point of the inquiry in which we are engaged, are tenfold increased in approaching the subject of which I propose to treat in this Lecture. If it is an unwelcome task at all times to engage in controversy—to attempt to exhibit the errors of our brethren, and to treat with a view to them any portion of Divine Truth—it is ten times more

distasteful when the particular subject treated of is so awfully sacred as that now before us. One longs that from this at least, all questionings and disputings might be removed, that in this sacred presence all strife of tongues, all the babble of controversy might be hushed, that we might all in humble reverence approach to hear our Divine Lord's words, and receiving them in simple faith, only believe and adore. One shrinks with horror from the profane, irreverent handling which this sacred theme has undergone at various times and in different portions of the Church—not least, alas! among ourselves—and so that which should have been for our good has become to us an occasion of falling*; and feels that if ever we are to know and be established in the truth concerning it, it must be in a very different spirit that we approach it. Especially am I unwilling to enter on the discussion of this subject when I feel, whatever be the errors of others, that we ourselves are far from reproach concerning it; that though our doctrine be right, our practice, as regards the great majority of people, cannot but be undoubtedly and grievously wrong; that if the superstitions that some have fallen into with respect to the Holy Sacrament are offensive to Almighty God, the disregard, irreverence, and utter neglect with

* Ps. lxi. 23.

which it is practically treated by the great majority even of members of the Church of England at the present day, cannot fail to be equally, if not more, offensive; so that we are more inclined to lay our hand upon our mouth, and acknowledge our own faults, than to censure the conduct of others, and to hesitate to attempt the removal of the mote from our brother's eye till we have cast out the beam from our own. And yet it seems as if I ought to speak about it—not so much on this point to expose the error of our brethren, though an error I believe there is, as to state plainly and faithfully the truth as we have received it—and endeavour to show what some among us may be tempted to doubt—and through that doubt, perhaps, more than from any other cause, to yield to the solicitations of Rome—that the doctrine of the Church of England on this subject is entirely agreeable to Holy Scripture, and coincides with the teaching of the early Church; that nothing more is needful or right; that if we only receive the truth as she has delivered it to us, and direct our practice accordingly, we have no possible room to doubt that we too have a share in the infinite, unspeakable benefit and blessing which our Incarnate Lord and God of His boundless mercy designed in this most holy mystery to bestow upon His Church. More particularly—inasmuch as the controversy on this sacred subject

is as to the true meaning of the solemn words of institution wherewith our Lord first delivered the consecrated elements to His disciples, and bequeathed that holy rite to the perpetual observance of His Church—we assert that the Church of England holds that those words are *really true*; that what we receive in the Holy Sacrament is “verily and indeed” the Body and Blood of Christ our Lord; that the Lord Jesus is, both as to His Godhead and His glorified Manhood, *really* PRESENT in that Holy Sacrament; present really though unseen, as really as when on the day of His resurrection He stood in the midst of His disciples; present to be adored and worshipped; present to be given and received; that as He gave Himself first to become man for our sakes, and then to die for us upon the cross, so in this other mystery of His love He gives Himself to become the food and sustenance of our souls. Of all errors concerning those blessed words of Christ our Lord, we believe that to be the worst which empties them of their truth, and would have us look on the consecrated elements as “bare empty signs,” “figures of a thing absent,” means to bring to our mind the thought of our Lord’s death and passion, and so to assist our faith in contemplating Him. Far different is the language which the Church of England throughout her formularies uses on this subject. In the Catechism she teaches us that “the inward

spiritual grace," or "thing signified" in the Lord's Supper "are the Body and Blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in that Holy Sacrament."

In the service for the celebration of the Sacrament she exhorts communicants that "if with a true penitent heart and lively faith we receive that Holy Sacrament, then we spiritually eat the flesh of Christ, and drink His blood; then we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us; we are one with Christ, and Christ with us." In the prayer of humble access she asks that the "gracious Lord" would "grant us so to eat the flesh of His dear Son, and to drink His blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by His body, and our souls washed through His most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in Him, and He in us."

And in the prayer of consecration—"that we receiving God's creatures of bread and wine, according to our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of His death and passion, may be partakers of His most blessed Body and Blood," and in one of the Post-Communion prayers she thanks God that He has vouchsafed to feed us, who have duly received those holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious body and blood of His Son our Saviour.

So the Twenty-eighth Article teaches us that

to such as rightly and worthily, and with faith receive it, the bread which we break is a partaking of the body of Christ, and likewise the cup of blessing is a partaking of His blood; where we may observe that *partaking* is the true translation of the word rendered *communion* in our version, in the passage from St. Paul there referred to.

To these statements from the Prayer Book, we may add other like ones from the Homilies, put forth by authority in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, which, though not of equal authority with the Prayer Book itself, help to illustrate its language; as where in the notice, at the end of the first book, of the Homilies forthcoming in the second, among the subjects there mentioned is that "of the due receiving of Christ's blessed body and blood under the form of bread and wine," and in the Homily itself, among other valuable teaching, occurs the passage, "Thus much we must be sure to hold, that in the Supper of the Lord there is no vain ceremony, no bare sign, no untrue figure of a thing absent, but, as the Scripture saith, the table of the Lord, . . . the memory of Christ, the annunciation of His death, yea, the Communion of the Body and Blood of the Lord, in a marvellous incorporation which by the operation of the Holy Ghost is through faith wrought in the souls of the faithful, whereby not only

their souls live to eternal life, but they surely trust to win for their bodies a resurrection to immortality."

It would be easy still further to confirm this teaching by numerous quotations from Divines of our Church, such as that of Archbishop Bramhall—"A true real presence no genuine son of the Church of England would ever deny. Christ said, This is My body and blood; and what He said we stedfastly believe;" or that of Bishop Cosin, "It is a monstrous error to deny that Christ is to be adored in the Eucharist. . . . If any one make a bare figure of the Sacrament, we ought not to suffer him in our Churches." But our limits do not permit us to multiply witnesses; what has been adduced is surely enough to show the point we wish to establish, that the Real Presence of Christ in the Holy Sacrament is held and taught by the Church of England, and that no true member of that Church—no one, that is, whose belief is according to her teaching, will ever deny or doubt it.

What then is it that the Church of England does deny, and for the denial of which she is denounced as heretical by Rome? Not the doctrine of the Real Presence itself, but a particular form and manner of stating it, which is by no means necessary to the doctrine, and involves a contradiction to the senses, and other unfitting results. The Church of Rome teaches

—has taught at least for the last 600 years, for it was not taught before—that the bread and wine in the Sacrament are changed out of their original nature into the substance of the body and blood of Christ, so that they cease to be bread and wine, and become only the holy things of which they are the Sacraments. In opposition to this we hold, that what we receive in the Holy Sacrament is *spiritual* food, the nourishment of our soul, an invisible meat and not a bodily, a spiritual substance and not a carnal; that “the bread and wine remain in their natural substances” though changed from their original use into the true sign and Sacrament of Christ’s body and blood, which are superadded to them as the “inward spiritual grace” of which they are the “sign,” “means,” and “pledge;” that the presence we all alike acknowledge is not a “corporal,” i. e. *material*, presence of Christ’s natural flesh and blood, but a spiritual presence of His Divine nature and His glorified humanity, by and through which He has become “a quickening spirit” to all the members of His mystical body.

This is the doctrine of the Church of England on the mysterious subject before us, and I hesitate not to assert concerning it that it is more consonant to Scripture, to reason, and to the belief of the early Church. To each of these authorities we will successively appeal: and first, to Holy Scripture. The words of

institution assert the fact of our Divine Lord's presence, but do not instruct us in what way they should be understood. But another portion of our Divine Lord's teaching may be with great probability supposed to apply to the subject, and throws great light upon it. It can hardly be doubted that the words uttered by Christ in the latter part of the sixth chapter of St. John, refer to the Holy Sacrament—that when our Lord said, "The bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world;" "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him," it was with reference to that holy rite which He was going about a twelvemonth later to ordain, as the great means of union with Himself. It can hardly be questioned that, whereas those words of His just quoted must have remained in the minds of those disciples who still adhered to Him, as dark, mysterious sayings which they could not attempt to understand—when, on the night in which He was betrayed, He took and blessed the Paschal bread and cup, and gave it with those solemn words, "This is My body—My blood," the one saying must have seemed to them an explanation of the other, and the conclusion have appeared to them irresistible, that by celebrating as He appointed that Holy Sacrament in re-

membrance of Him, they did indeed eat His flesh and drink His blood, and become partakers of Him to everlasting life.

But now, if this is the case, which surely no unprejudiced student of Scripture can doubt, then we have in that same sixth chapter of St. John a most valuable guide as to how our Lord's words are to be understood. At the close of that solemn discourse—which excited so much resistance and unbelief, and caused many of the disciples to go away and walk no more with Him—our Divine Lord, answering in intent the inward cavilling of their minds, said *, “Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where He was before? It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you† are spirit and are life.” As if He would say, “If you are surprised at My saying this now, how much more will you be surprised when I am ascended up to heaven? To eat My flesh and drink My blood will seem harder to you then than when I was on earth. But it is the Spirit that quickeneth; that life-giving power of which I spoke belongs to God, who is a Spirit, and to Me as God. My natural flesh avails not for the life of the soul, nor is it that which is ordained for your life. But

* vv. 61, 62, 63.

† The word “they,” repeated in the English version, is not in the original.

when I am risen and ascended up on high, My glorified manhood will become a source of life to all My people. Through partaking of that in the ordinance which I shall appoint, your souls and bodies shall be quickened to eternal life."

Now, thus understood, and it seems the only right way of understanding them, these words of our Lord become a most valuable guide to the interpretation, not merely of the mysterious declaration immediately before, but also of the words of institution. They seem to be a warning against the gross and carnal interpretation which the Church of Rome has given to the latter, and through which, not then alone when they were spoken, but in all ages, many have been caused to stumble at them; and to help us to an apprehension of the manner of His presence, which is of the greatest assistance to our weak and hesitating faith.

But secondly, we assert that our understanding of the doctrine of the presence of Christ in the Holy Sacrament is more consonant to reason. This may seem to many an unsafe authority to appeal to. If human reason is to be the judge, what doctrine of the faith can stand? And, indeed, to reject a doctrine proposed to our faith merely because our reason cannot fathom it, is a principle wholly unwarrantable, and fatal, if consistently carried out, to all religious belief. But there is a great difference between what is

beyond reason and what is against it—between that which reason is unable to explain and that which it directly contradicts. For instance, we believe that God exists, though our senses give no evidence of His existence, and how He exists our reason cannot explain. But to require me to believe that those things exist not which I see and feel around me, would be an unreasonable demand upon my faith. So, again, it is often objected by unbelievers against the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity, that it involves a contradiction. I cannot believe, they say, that God is One and yet Three. Now, if such a contradiction really existed, the objection would be a very serious one. But there is not any contradiction, because we are not taught that God is three in the same respect that He is one, but that He is three in person and one in substance; and though our reason may fail to apprehend the nature of that mysterious union, there is no ground to complain of any contradiction in the doctrine which declares it.

The Roman dogma of transubstantiation involves a contradiction of the senses. It requires us to believe that things are not what sight, and touch, and taste declare them to be. It is true, the contradiction is sought to be evaded by a subtle distinction drawn between the substance and the accidents; the “substance,” it is said, “of the elements is changed, the accidents only remain;” the term accidents being here

used in a special, philosophical sense to denote those particular properties of any object which are the signs by which we recognize it. But this distinction between substance and accidents rests upon a philosophical misconception prevalent at the time, but which we can see to be a delusion.

It was supposed that in every thing there was some specific substance underlying all its properties, and to which the properties were super-added, so that the substance might be changed, and the properties or accidents still remain. But this, we know, is not the case. The properties of any thing together make up what it is. Some are common to all matter, others are peculiar to solids, others to metal, others to stone. For any substance to have all the properties of iron or stone, and yet not be iron or stone, is a contradiction in terms. And such a contradiction the Roman dogma of transubstantiation involves.

But there is another way in which the appeal to reason may be made even more lawfully, and with a still more decisive result. There can be no more profitable exercise of the human mind than the study of God's dealings in nature and grace. There can be no stronger argument to a believing mind, than when any thing alleged to be from God can be shown to be in accordance with His other works; and it is sorely against the claim of a Divine original when no such likeness can be found. Now, all revelation

testifies to one great law pervading the universe, and exhibiting wonderful analogies in the realms of nature and of grace. It is the union of the visible with the invisible, the material with the immaterial, the spirit with the flesh. The visible universe with its Unseen, All-pervading, Omnipresent Ruler, the human body with its immaterial animating soul—these are the natural instances in which that law applies; and when we turn to God's spiritual kingdom, the same great principle seems exhibited to us in numerous examples. The Scriptures, which are the Word of God, and yet the writings of men; the Incarnate Son, who is the Eternal Word, very God of very God, and yet no less very man, of the substance of His mother born in the world, in whom "two whole and perfect natures," united yet distinct, subsist together, "never to be divided;" the Church of Christ on earth, the one body and one spirit of which the Apostle speaks, consisting outwardly of weak and sinful men, yet inwardly the Body mystical of Christ, the temple of the Holy Ghost—these are spiritual analogies which would naturally guide us in the attempt to apprehend any fresh mystery proposed to us. And it is not too much to say, that the belief in the Eucharistic Presence, as we hold it, is exactly consonant to the blessed mystery of the Incarnation, and those other spiritual analogies of which the Incarnation is a type; and that the doctrine of Tran-

substantiation equally corresponds to those old heresies which supposed the humanity of our Lord to be lost in His Godhead, or His Godhead to be merged in His manhood. As man is spirit and flesh, as Christ is God and man, and truly God without ceasing to be man, so we believe the consecrated elements in the Eucharist, without ceasing to be what they were, to become to us the outward sign and sacrament of spiritual realities mysteriously joined with them, so that, receiving the material substances (or creatures, as they are called) of bread and wine, we become partakers of the most blessed and life-giving Flesh and Blood of Christ.

This brings us to another authority to which we may appeal—that of the Fathers of the early Church; not, be it ever remembered, as regarding them of equal authority with Scripture, but only as valuable witnesses of its true interpretation. High indeed, is the language employed both in ancient liturgies and in the writers of the early Church on the subject of the Holy Sacrament and our Divine Lord's Presence therein. Nothing can exceed the awe and reverence with which they speak of it, and the unanimity with which they acknowledge it as a real Presence, an actual partaking of Christ. And yet there are not wanting passages in all the chief Fathers which show that the Presence they believed in was spiritual, not carnal—that they acknowledged the elements

to remain in their natural substances, and that the effect of consecration was that grace was superadded to them. In evidence of this we may first allege the frequent bringing forward of the Incarnation as supplying an analogy of the Eucharistic presence—the latter being used in some cases to explain the former—and yet that the union with the Godhead involved a loss of our Lord's true manhood was a heresy which they abhorred. Again, Irenæus says *, As the bread from the earth receiving the invocation of God is no longer *common* bread, but the Eucharist, consisting of *two things, earthly and heavenly*, so also our bodies, receiving the Eucharist, are no longer corruptible, but have hope of eternal resurrection. So Tertullian speaks of our Lord as distributing bread to His disciples, and calling it His body; "*that is,*" he says, "*the figure of His body* †," and elsewhere He speaks of bread by which Christ *represents* His very body ‡. So Origen, while exhorting § to all care and reverence in receiving the Body of the Lord, "lest any portion of it should be lost," says in another place ||, "acknowledge that they are figures which are written in the sacred volumes, therefore as spiritual, not as carnal, examine what is said. Not only in the

* Adv. Haer. lib. iv. 32.

† Adv. Marcion. iv. c. 40.

‡ Ibid. i. c. 14.

§ In Exod. Hom. xiii.

|| In Levit. Hom. vii. 5.

Old Testament, but in the New, there is a letter that killeth. For if according to the letter thou receivest even this saying, *Except ye eat My Flesh and drink My Blood*, the letter killeth." So Cyprian speaks of the wine in the cup by which the blood of Christ is *represented**. St. Athanasius, speaking of our Lord's discourse at Capernaum, gives the same interpretation of it which I have already mentioned. Therefore, he says, Christ made mention of His ascension into Heaven that He might draw them off from understanding it corporally; that they might understand that the flesh He spoke of was heavenly food from above, and spiritual nourishment given by Him †. St. Cyril of Jerusalem speaks of the Body of the Lord being given to us *in the form* ‡ of bread, and His Blood *in the form* of wine §; and elsewhere says that the bread of the Eucharist, after consecration, is *no longer mere bread*, implying that *it is bread still*.

St. Chrysostom, although employing the highest and most glowing language to describe the Real Presence ||, tells us that we ought to

* "Quo Christi sanguis ostenditur," Ep. 63.

† Athanas. Op., tom. i. p. 979.

‡ ἐν τύπῳ—Catech. Mystagog. iv. 1.

§ Ibid. iii. 3—"As the bread of the Eucharist, after the invocation of the Holy Ghost, is no longer *mere bread* (οὐκ ἔστι ἄρτος λιτός).

|| Such as the following: "When you behold the Lord sacrificed and lying, and the priest standing by the sacrifice and

look on the mysteries, i. e. the Sacraments, *not outwardly and carnally, but spiritually, and with the eyes of our souls* *. And in an Epistle generally attributed to him †, we read that before the bread is consecrated we call it bread, but after consecration it is no longer called bread, but is held worthy to be called the body of the Lord, *although the substance of bread remains* ‡.

Most of all, St. Augustine recognizes the spiritual nature of the Sacrament. "Prepare," he says, "not thy teeth, but thy heart §. Our Lord hesitated not to say, This is My body, when He gave the sign of His body ||." Paraphrasing our Lord's words to His disciples at the time of institution, he says, "Understand spiritually what I have spoken. You are not to eat that Body which you see, and to drink that Blood which they will shed who are about to crucify Me. It is a Sacrament which I have

praying, and all the people sprinkled with that precious blood, are you not immediately transported to heaven?" De Sacerd. iii. 4. Again, "Behold, thou seest Him, thou touchest Him, thou eatest Him; He gives Himself to thee, not only to see, but to touch, to eat, and to receive within. How pure, then, should he be who partakes of that sacrifice! the hand that divides His flesh, the mouth filled with spiritual fire, the tongue empurpled with His awful blood!" Hom. 83 in Matt. c. 26.

* In Joan. c. vi. Hom. 47.

† Ad Cæsarium.

‡ Etiam si natura panis in ipso permansit.

§ De Verbis Domini, Serm. 33, tom. v. p. 566.

|| Contra Adimantum, tom. viii. p. 124.

committed to you. Though it be visibly celebrated, it must be invisibly understood*." Again, "What you see is bread and the cup. But as your faith must be instructed, it is His Body and Blood. These things are called sacraments because in them *one thing is seen, another is understood*†." Other passages *might* be adduced, but these will serve as specimens. And one passage of this kind, in any one writer, recognizing the spiritual character of the Sacrament, is sufficient to qualify all the high language that may be elsewhere used by him on the subject.

This then is the teaching of the Fathers on the nature of the Eucharistic presence. If they held that presence to be spiritual, they sanction the teaching of the English Church. The truth is, the dogma of transubstantiation was of comparatively recent growth. It arose in the darkness and superstitions of the Middle Ages; first in the work of a monk named Radbert. His opinions provoked much controversy, and were ably opposed, but were more likely to prevail at that time, and the doctrine was finally and authoritatively adopted at the Council of Lateran (A.D. 1215), under Pope Innocent III.

But this innovation on the original truth is not the only thing we have to charge upon the

* In Psalm xcvi. tom. iv. p. 1066.

† Sermon. 272, ad Infantes, tom. v. p. 1103.

Church of Rome. To this error in doctrine she has added an abuse in practice, which is a far more flagrant departure from the original institution. In direct disregard of the words of Christ, which bade all partake of the Cup which He had blessed, of the teaching of the Fathers, and the unvarying custom of the whole Catholic Church down to the twelfth century, the Church of Rome denies to her lay members the privilege of drinking of the Cup, and pronounces her anathema against all who presume to censure that denial; so that those who should bring themselves to receive the doctrine of the Sacrament as she teaches it, and all the high language she uses concerning it, when they came to her altars to communicate, would find it to be only a mutilated sacrament that they received.

There is yet another abuse which we must briefly notice—an abuse in practice founded upon error in doctrine. The Church of Rome teaches that the Eucharist is a true and proper sacrifice of Christ's Body and Blood offered to God by the priest, and available for the living and the dead. Now, it is not to be denied that the Holy Sacrament may in some respects be rightly termed a sacrifice. As the highest act of our worship, the great central means of intercourse with God, the great federal rite by which we obtain the benefits of redemption, in which we offer to God our thanksgivings, our intercessions, and our alms, and also the obla-

tions of bread and wine, then solemnly placed upon the altar—above all, as the solemn memorial and commemoration of the one true Sacrifice of our Lord and Saviour upon the Cross—representing It now that It is past in the same way that all the sacrifices of the Jewish Church prefigured It when It was yet future—in which we not only show and celebrate before men that precious Death which is the ground of all our hope, but also plead It and Its infinite merit in the sight of God—in which, lastly, having received the holy mysteries, “we offer ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Him* ;” for all these reasons the Divine Service of the Holy Sacrament may fitly be deemed a sacrifice, and is most rightly conceived of in a sacrificial aspect. And so it was ever spoken of by the Christian Fathers, as taking the place of the sacrifices of the Old Testament, and especially of that of the Paschal Lamb, of which it was a continuation, and a fulfilment of the prophecy of Malachi, which declared that from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof the name of God should be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense should be offered to His name, and a pure *bread* offering†.

And yet there must ever be a certain limitation in the employment of this term. The one

* Post-Communion Service.

† Mal. i. 11.

true Sacrifice has been offered once for all upon the cross. Our Lord Jesus Christ “made there, by His one oblation of Himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world*.” St. Paul, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, insists strongly on the sufficiency of that one sacrifice of Christ†. He “needeth not daily—to offer up sacrifice—for this He did once, when He offered up Himself.” And again, Christ “by His own blood entered in *once for all* into the holy place‡.” “Nor yet that He should offer Himself often—but now once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.” And whereas “every priest,” under the law, “standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices,” Christ, after “*He had offered one sacrifice for sins*, for ever sat down on the right hand of God. For by one offering hath He perfected *for ever* them that are sanctified§.” Nothing can be plainer than this teaching. The sacrifice is perfect and complete. True, it is perpetually pleaded by Him who is both our Sacrifice and our High Priest in heaven, and in that sense is continually present before God, even as it was under the image of a lamb that was slain in the midst

* Consecration Prayer.

† Heb. vii. 27.

‡ ἐφάραξ. Heb. ix. 12, 25, 26.

§ Ibid. x. 11, 12, 14.

of the throne that our Lord was represented in the visions of the Revelation. But that the Sacrifice so perfect and complete should need to be, or be capable of being, iterated or repeated, can surely be nothing else than a contradiction of the teaching of the Apostle. Yet this is what the Church of Rome practically teaches. Every time a priest celebrates Mass, he is to be regarded as offering up Christ anew to God. The sacrifice on the cross is lost sight of in the sacrifice at the altar—the priest on earth supersedes the office of our great High Priest in heaven.

Surely with the Epistle to the Hebrews in our hands, we cannot hesitate which to believe, though in believing one we can only condemn the other. If the common Roman “belief” concerning the Mass be true, the teaching of St. Paul must be erroneous. If the teaching of St. Paul be true, “the (iterated) sacrifices of Masses” can only be what the Church of England hesitates not to term them, “blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits.”

And yet upon this view of the character of the Eucharistic Service is founded the habitual mode of worship of the thousands who are members of the Romish communion. The universal act of worship in the Church of Rome is attendance at the Mass, not to communicate, but to witness it; joining more or less in the service or offering private prayers. Non-communicating attendance is the rule,

- communion is the exception ; the theory being that those who are present at the service, and join in spirit with it, receive the benefits of the sacrifice. Now it is a strong argument against this, that it is completely at variance with the whole sacrificial teaching of both the Old and New Testaments. For according to that teaching the one mode of participating in the benefits of the sacrifice was by *partaking of the victim*. Every sacrifice was followed by a feast, and those who ate of the feast were sharers in the sacrifice. So St. Paul in 1 Cor. x. argues against Christians going to heathen feasts, because by eating of the victims offered to idols, they became partakers of the idol sacrifices, and had fellowship with devils. He
- refers to the well-known usage of the Jewish Church, that they who ate of the sacrifice *were partakers of the altar*, i. e. joined in the offering; and then reminds them that the cup which is blessed and the bread which is broken is a partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ*. Surely the inference from this is plain. Non-communicating attendance may be lawful, may be expedient on occasions, may be edifying, but it was not the usage of the ancient Church; it is not the way to gain the benefits of the Sacrament. As those who ate of the offering

* See the Bishop of Ely on the Thirty-Nine Articles, Art. XXXI.

were partakers of the Jewish sacrifice, so it is by receiving the Holy Sacrament that we participate in the benefits of the sacrifice of Christ.

By receiving the Holy Sacrament we share in the benefits of the death of Christ. My brethren, if this statement be true, and its truth cannot be questioned, what shall we say of the practice of the great majority of our people? If the practice of Romanists be bad, is not theirs worse? If Romanists are superstitious, is not their fault utter unbelief? If Romanists are satisfied with being present without communicating, is not that a great deal better than staying away altogether; better than going out, as most do, in the middle of the service, when the blessed Sacrament is to be celebrated? Oh, brethren, how often shall we speak to you in vain, and warn you of the sin, the folly, the ingratitude, the dishonour to our Incarnate God, that every one of you is guilty of when he persists in turning his back on the Holy Sacrament when the Lord Himself so lovingly invites him? How long will you deceive yourselves with the excuse that you are not fit to come, when you know that none of us are fit, and that it is just those who feel their unfitness, if only they wish to be better, that should be the last to stay away?

In the name of Christ I entreat all those of you who are not communicants, not to go on

deferring to perform a duty which you all acknowledge, to claim a privilege the inestimable value of which you cannot know.

Christ has said, Except we eat His flesh and drink His blood we have no life in us ; will you dare to disbelieve His words ? Your incarnate and crucified Lord offers Himself to be the food of your soul, will you dare to turn away from Him ? It is by joining in the solemn commemoration of the Sacrifice of His death and partaking of the heavenly feast, that we gain the right to join hereafter in the song of " Worthy is the Lamb " in heaven.

LECTURE VI.

THE POSITION OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH DEFENDED ON CATHOLIC PRINCIPLES.

Ps. xxvi. 12.

"My foot standeth right: I will praise the Lord in the congregations."

IN the course of the inquiry which we have been lately pursuing, we have been led to examine the claims and some special points of the teaching of the Church of Rome, by the light of Scripture and the witness of the early Church. And we have seen, I trust, in some measure, how weak is the foundation of the former, and what a grievous departure from original tradition is involved in the latter. But the requirements of the object before us (which is simply to fortify your minds against any assaults that may be made upon you by Romanists, and to confirm and establish any who may already be disquieted by doubts in that direction) will not be satisfied by merely attacking the position of our opponents

without seeking to defend our own. For the tactics of Rome and her advocates are more aggressive than defensive. They do not labour to establish the claims of the Papacy upon Scripture and Antiquity, or to reconcile with the same authority the distinctive portions of her teaching; most of them, probably, are too well aware that this would be a hopeless task. They prefer to attack us on those points which are most open to assault. They tell us, for instance, that we are *no Church*, that we have no authorized ministry, no fixed rule of faith; that we are wholly under the control of the Sovereign, a mere department of the State; that we are divided from the rest of Christendom, and full of divisions among ourselves; that even if our formularies are sound, the belief of our people, and even the teaching of our clergy, are not in accordance with them; that all kinds of heresy and error are tolerated among us, and that we have no power to correct or expel them; that we are bringing forth the fruits of our separation from the true centre of unity in confusion and growing decay, and hastening rapidly to our ruin.

These are some of the reproaches which are heaped upon us by the advocates of Rome. And when they see us inclined to quail beneath the attack, they fail not to improve the advantage. They point to the Church of Rome, her numbers, her apparent unity, her wonder-

ful organization and strength, her works of faith and piety, the devoted lives, the undeniable holiness of many of her members; they suggest the comfort of terminating all disputes, of allaying all inward doubts by submitting to her authority, and allure the waverer with the attractive promises of security and peace.

These are the tactics of Rome; this is the attack before which many—some alas! of our noblest—have fallen, and with which any of us may before we know it be assailed. And it is to the consideration how this sort of attack may best be met that I wish to devote the present Lecture.

There is one kind of answer which might easily be given to the assaults which Romanists make on the Church of England. The ultra Protestant, the Rationalist, the Dissenter, and those among ourselves who sympathize with them, have an answer ready to hand. They would say, "True, we are isolated and divided from the rest of the Church Catholic; grant that we have lost the Apostolic succession, that our Church is but a department of the State, that we have lost all power of discipline and correction of error, grant that this is so, what does it matter? We own no authority but that of the Bible, and that every man is free to interpret for himself. Faith and religion are things wholly between a man and his Maker; we must accept what we believe to be the truth and con-

sort with those who agree with us, and not trouble ourselves about any thing else. What Church we are of, what ministry we have, what Ecclesiastical government we are under, these are things indifferent, and may be settled by the opinion of the majority or the laws of the State." Such is the answer that many would give to the reproaches of Rome. But that is not the answer we can give, or any one who thoroughly accepts the teaching of the Prayer Book. We are debarred from it by a simple form of words to which we were pledged at our baptism, which we learnt almost in our infancy, but in which, according to their true meaning, the sense in which they were framed and imposed upon us, the whole principle of our position as regards our fellow Christians is involved. That form of words is the Apostles' Creed, which, coming down to us from the most remote antiquity, teaches us to say, "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church."

For what do those words mean? Not merely, as some seem to take them, that there are Christians in the world. They must mean a great deal more than that, though what they do mean is often overlooked. No single article of the Christian faith is more lost sight of, probably, than this.

It means that Christ our Lord (for it is of His works and not of man's that the Creed speaks), besides accomplishing the work of our

redemption, and sending His Apostles to preach His Gospel, did form upon earth a sacred society of those who believed in Him, a society which was to spread through the world and be its light and purifying leaven, the perpetual depositary of His truth, of which His Apostles were the first appointed Rulers, and the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven the directing animating Spirit, which, under that Divine direction, was framed and organized so as to present in all parts of the world to which it should be extended the same outward constitution, the same organization and government, the same confession of faith, the same ordinances similarly administered; a society in reference to which the Lord had said, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven;" "If any man hear not the Church, let him be as a heathen and a publican;" "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end;" and prayed to the Father that it might be one, even as the Godhead is one; of which the Apostle wrote, There is one body and one Spirit, one Lord, faith, baptism.

This, we believe, is meant by the Article of the Creeds, "One Holy Catholic Apostolic Church;" and pledged to this as part of our baptismal faith, we cannot admit any principle nor allow any account of our position that is not in harmony with it. Believing in the Catholic Church, we claim to be members of it,

i. e. to be not Christians merely, but Catholics, to hold the Catholic faith, and all discipline, teaching, and government that really deserves the name. If we cannot pretend to enjoy actual unity with the other branches of the Church Catholic (since the divisions of Christendom, like the disruption of the ancient kingdom of Israel, are a melancholy fact which no one can deny, whatever account he may give of them), we, at least, must be at pains to show that it is by no fault of ours that they have occurred, and that though at present divided from other Communion of the Church that we are one with the original undivided Church; that we recognize and value all the gifts which Christ bestowed on His mystical body; that we have an Apostolic ministry, Apostolic worship, and desire Apostolic discipline; that while sharing with other branches of the Church in all that is truly Catholic, we are only diverse from them in what is comparatively unimportant; that we have some great advantages which other branches of the Church have not, and no less unquestionable tokens than they have of the presence of the Lord and His life-giving Spirit among us; that with respect to the evils which we suffer and heartily deplore, they are not greater than other evils with which other branches of the Church are burdened, evils from one kind or other of which the Church of Christ has never been

free since her life of conflict and trial first began upon the earth.

First, then, with respect to our faith, it is that of the Church Catholic before it was divided. We hold the same rule of faith as contained in Holy Scripture and witnessed by the Universal Church. The three Creeds which we acknowledge as "to be thoroughly received and believed," express the faith of the undivided Church, and *formed the only Creed of Christendom* till a Pope of Rome added to it after the Reformation. The government of the Church by Bishops, of which we find clear indications in Scripture, and which we know to have been the universal practice in the age immediately after the Apostles, has been by God's great mercy preserved to us, and our Bishops are the direct successors of those who first bore rule in these islands. We recognize the three orders of the ministry instituted in the ancient Church, and deny that any man can lawfully execute any of those sacred offices without Episcopal Ordination *. Of the Sacraments ordained by Christ we acknowledge the necessity (where they may be had), and own them as blessed means of spiritual grace; and though distinguishing the two great Sacraments of the Gospel from all other rites, we recognize beside them the other Apostolic ordinances

* See the Preface to the Ordination Services in the Book of Common Prayer.

of Confirmation, Ordination, and Absolution. In the administration of the Sacraments and the other rites and ceremonies of the Church we follow the Catholic order as contained in the ancient Liturgies, of which our own is in all important respects a faithful copy. How closely it follows the ancient uses of this kingdom and of the Universal Church, where it differs from them only more closely conforming to older and more primitive usage; to what a great extent we in our Church Service, Sunday after Sunday, and day by day, are using the same prayers, the same glorious hymns of praise, the same Collects, Epistles, and Gospels, with "the Holy Church throughout all the world," those only who have studied the sources of our English Liturgy can fully know.

That we are in fact divided from the other branches of the Church we sorrowfully acknowledge, but we maintain that this is not our fault. With the Eastern Churches we had long suffered a suspension of communion through being involved in the schism between them and the rest of the Western Church. But that communion the British Churches have more than once endeavoured, and in fact are now again endeavouring, to restore.

From the rest of the Western Church our separation was no act of ours. The English Church disclaimed any intention to break the unity of Christendom. She only threw off the

usurped power and jurisdiction of the Roman Pontiff within these realms, to which in the first instance she unwillingly submitted, and against which she had often struggled. She acted on the known and admitted principle that every branch of the Church in its provincial Synods hath power to correct errors, to reform abuses, and to pass its own laws. And this was the act of the Church and not merely of the State. In the reign of King Henry VIII. one simple but momentous question was submitted by that monarch to the Bishops and Clergy of England in their Convocation, "Whether the Bishop of Rome had, according to the Word of God, any more power in this Church and Realm of England than any other foreign Bishop?" To this question they all, with one exception, returned, as the chief Universities of Europe, and even the Monasteries, had done before, the unanimous reply, "that he had not," and their subsequent conduct was the simple result of that determination.

As the same Church in her lawful Synod, only freed from the intolerable foreign yoke which had for centuries oppressed her, she proceeded to reform within herself those abuses which that foreign power mainly had upheld. Yet, so thoroughly was the Church regarded as one and the same, that it is a

well-known fact that those in England who still acknowledged the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome, all those who would now be called Roman Catholics, continued to worship at our Churches, and even to communicate at our altars, till a decree of Pope Pius V., in the reign of Elizabeth, forbade them to do so. Nor did the English Church admit any undue subjection to the civil power. The title of "*Head of the Church*," claimed by Henry VIII., was not conceded without the qualification, as far as is agreeable to the law of Christ, and was not continued by his successors. The theory of the Royal Supremacy adopted at the Reformation was simply this, that the Sovereign was "supreme governor over all persons and in all causes within his dominions," the source of all jurisdiction in Ecclesiastical as in civil affairs. But the two branches of jurisdiction were kept perfectly distinct, and the principle was expressly recognized that spiritual affairs were to be administered by spiritual officers, as temporal affairs were by civil officers. It can be clearly shown that no more authority was given to the king by the Church of England at the Reformation than was yielded to the Christian emperors by the ancient Church. Whatever changes of doctrine or discipline were introduced were the act of the Church in her Synods; the authority of Parlia-

ment was only added to make them the law of the land *. In none of those changes was any Catholic principle violated ; they were the result of an earnest examination of Scripture and antiquity, and only that was rejected which did not bear the test.

But the Catholicity of the Church of England is not less plainly shown in the temper she exhibits towards other branches of the Church. It was a characteristic of the great heresies of ancient times, as it is the case with some sects now, that they regarded themselves as alone forming the true Church, and all the rest as heretical. Very different from this is the language and temper of our formularies. Thoroughly recognizing her position as a branch of the Church Catholic—a branch only, not the whole—she continually prays for the whole body of which she is a member: “for the good estate of the Catholic Church ; that all who profess and call themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth ;” “that it may please Thee to rule and govern Thy Holy Church

* The real object for which the decisions of the Church in Convocation were ratified by Parliament is often overlooked. It was simply to impose them by law upon all the people of the land. It is as if, the Church having settled the religion of the country, the Parliament said to all the people, “ You shall be of this religion.” Now that the law with respect to the toleration of other forms of religion is entirely and happily changed, it is not easy to see what Parliament would have to do in the matter.

universal (or Catholic) in the right way; beseeching Thee to inspire continually the universal (or Catholic) Church with the spirit of truth, unity, and concord." In particular we pray for the clergy, not our own merely, but those of the whole Church, the Bishop of Rome among the number: "that it may please Thee to illuminate all bishops, priests, and deacons, with true knowledge and understanding of Thy Word;" and, at the great intercession in the Communion Service, "Give grace, O Heavenly Father, to all bishops and curates;" and, at the Ember seasons, observed in all parts of Christendom, we pray for the heavenly guidance of the bishops of the whole Church, and for blessing on those who are ordained. The petition which spoke of the Bishop of Rome and all his enormities was soon expunged from the Litany, and from no part of it, as it stands, breathes there any thing but charity towards all the members of Christ. Is this the temper of a schismatical body, or of a true and living branch, that feels its relation to the rest of the trunk, and longs for closer union with it?

We have spoken hitherto only of what we have in common with other branches of the Catholic Church. But we must not forget some points in which we have great and undeniable advantage over the rest. Is it a small thing that the Word of God in our mother tongue is in free circulation, and that the daily public

reading of it in the Service of the Church—a practice which existed in ancient times, but which had long fallen into disuse—has been restored among us? Is it not a great and unquestionable advantage that the public service is in our own native English, instead of being veiled in a language not “understood of the people,” thus rendering our service one that all the congregation can take part in, and making it, as one well qualified to judge has said *, the only living example in Christendom of truly congregational worship? Is it a small thing to have the blessed Sacrament administered as Christ appointed it, in both kinds, to all, instead of the mutilated form in which it is given in the Church of Rome? Is it nothing that, without at all abrogating the necessity of good works, or leading us, as some would do, to depend on fancied assurance, or sudden excitement (for neither of those doctrines have any countenance in the teaching of the Church), the blessed truth that we are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which had been for ages obscured and lost sight of, is restored to us as the only valid ground of dependence for the soul? And if those other doctrines now peculiar to Rome, which we have lately been considering, are not

* Rev. Prebendary Freeman, “Principles of Divine Service,” Part I.

part of "the faith once delivered to the saints," but corruptions in a later age of the original deposit of truth—the worship of the Blessed Virgin, the invocation of the Saints—the adoration of images and relics—the dismal belief in Purgatory—the dogma of Transubstantiation, such a needless stumbling-block to faith—the iterated sacrifice of the Mass, with witnesses instead of communicants—is it not an unspeakable blessing to be rid of these accretions, to have, as it were, our heaven cleared of the earth-born mists that obscured it, and the pure, celestial light of truth allowed to shed its beams upon us ?

But there are other evils charged upon us, which we cannot deny, and of which our adversaries make the most in their attack upon us. The prevalence of belief and teaching inconsistent with our formularies—the multitudes who have separated from us—the darkness and ignorance of the masses of our people—the presence, unrestrained, of heresy and error—our many internal divisions—our unsatisfactory relations with the State—these are evils which we cannot but admit, though we are far from admitting the conclusion that the Romanist would draw from them.

We cannot but admit that there is enough to cause serious anxiety in the spiritual condition of England at the present time. The Church of England is in a measure responsible for the

spiritual welfare of the whole population, not of England only, but of her colonies and other foreign possessions. But we know that of this enormous multitude there are millions in a state of virtual heathenism at home, and many more in a state of absolute rampant heathenism abroad. Multitudes of our people are separated from the communion of the Church under manifold forms of schism, heresy, and error; many there are within the pale of the Church whose religious belief,—many, alas! of the clergy whose teaching—is widely different from her formularies.

The tone of our popular literature, and especially of the newspaper press, ever forward to ridicule and condemn any high view of our responsibilities and our duty, and to discourage any great work for God—is a sad index of the low ebb of real Christian faith among us. And besides this, our own internal divisions; the manifold forms of error that are rife—the spread among us, within a recent period, of the fatal poison of scepticism and unbelief, that seeks to undermine the authority of Scripture, to destroy all that is supernatural in our holy Faith, and would end by leaving us without any faith at all; the unsatisfactory condition of the relations of the Church towards the State, which have so greatly altered from their original settlement at the Reformation, and which call imperatively

for adjustment, in which it is not a question merely of property and endowments, but of what is far more precious, the integrity of the Faith, the very liberty of the Church to do her work and proclaim her message—since for the Crown, the due authority of which the Church has ever acknowledged, is substituted practically the authority of Parliament, and that a Parliament consisting, not as it used to do, only of members of the Church, but of men of all persuasions and all creeds, many of whom avow the bitterest hostility towards her, while at the same time the free action of the Church's own assemblies is restrained—the decision of the highest questions of spiritual doctrine taken out of her hands and placed in those of secular judges, whose recent decisions have overruled the plain meaning of her formularies, and held it allowable to teach that the whole Bible is not the Word of God, and that everlasting punishment does not mean lasting for ever; the way in which the increase of the Episcopate, now scarcely larger than in the reign of Henry VIII., though the population has increased twenty-fold, though earnestly called for by clergy and laity, is resisted by the civil power—all these, we freely admit, are matters of serious importance, and sufficient to cause anxiety to every thoughtful mind. But are they therefore, though taken at the worst, fatal

objections to our position as a living branch of the Catholic Church of Christ? We answer, unhesitatingly, No. Great as are the evils which we suffer, they are not greater than have been suffered at all times by Christ's Church; not, we are bold to say, so great as other evils which exist and are tolerated in the Church of Rome. From the first beginning of her history, the state of God's Church on earth has been ever one of conflict. In one form or other, either that of direct assault from without, or the more subtle danger of decay and corruption within, the powers of evil have ever been waging a deadly war against her. In the very age of the Apostles, errors and heresies arose in the Churches which they themselves had planted. The Churches of Galatia forsook the Gospel they had received for the false tenets of Judaizing teachers. The Church of Corinth was infested with heretics who denied the Resurrection and rejected the authority of St. Paul. The Epistles of St. John and St. Jude give solemn warnings against forms of deadly error that were then pervading the Church. In the fourth century, when the Church first enjoyed the favour of the civil power, the deadly heresy of Arius arose, and though checked by the Council of Nicæa, yet through the advantage of Court favour, ay, and the sanction for a moment of the Bishop of Rome himself, for it is a well-known fact that Pope Liberius subscribed the

heretical creed of the Arian Council of Sirmium*, so overspread the Church that at one time it could be said that the great Athanasius was the one solitary defender of the truth against the world. Yet were those Churches in the Apostles' time, by reason of the false teaching among them, any the less branches of the Church of Christ? Was the Church in the fourth century any less the Catholic Church because the very gates of hell seemed so nearly to prevail against it? No, brethren, the life of the Church on earth, like the life of her Lord Himself, like the life of her individual members, is, and has ever been, a life of conflict and peril; a constant struggle for very life against adversaries within and without, a bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus; and to suppose that the presence of evils and wrongs, of errors and corruptions, invalidate the claims of the Church of England to be a living branch of Christ's Holy Catholic Church, is to object to what is a perpetual and necessary condition of God's kingdom in the world.

For, blessed be God, against these tokens of evil we can set other equally undeniable tokens of good — tokens not to be gainsaid of true life, of the presence of the Lord and His life-giving Spirit among us, sufficient

* See Note at the end of Lecture III.

of themselves to decide the question of our position.

If the Church of England at the Reformation became separated from the true Church of Christ, she should soon have become a dead and withered branch. No fruit should from thenceforth have grown on her, and the leaves of outward profession should soon have withered away. But has that been the case? Through the last three hundred years has not the Church of England given many tokens of life? In each century, in the midst of troubles, have not men arisen whose life and teaching are evidences of the rock whence they were hewn? Hooker, Andrewes, G. Herbert, J. Taylor, Bishop Hall, Sanderson, the saintly Ken, the learned Hammond, Bishop Bull, whose defence of the Nicene faith received the thanks of the Gallican Church, Robert Nelson, the pattern of a pious layman, Bishop Wilson, whose island diocese a foreign invader would not enter—these are some of the shining lights which God has raised up to show He had not forsaken us.

And though in the last century the Church seemed sunk in apathy and indifference, and the extravagant teaching of Wesley seemed the only life within her—yet is not the way in which we have been quickened out of that state by a new awakened spirit of earnestness and zeal, that throbs now within every member of

our body, a fresh demonstration of the Divine presence within us? Coming, as it did, not from without, but from within, leading first to a revival of Evangelical teaching, and then to a reseeking of the great principles of Catholic truth, calling us to "stand in the old ways and seek for the old paths," leading us to build the dilapidated sanctuary and beautify the houses of God throughout the land, to restore the worship of the Church as it was meant to be conducted, and give back to it the reality and beauty that it had lost—reviving among us the daily sacrifice of prayer and praise, and the frequent celebration, long disused, of the blessed Sacrament of Christ's body and blood—arousing within us a care first for our own poor and then a remembrance of those dependent on us in foreign lands, and stirring us up to repair our long neglect in that respect—sending out our noblest sons to preach the Gospel to the heathen—multiplying our colonial dioceses, so that from four at the beginning of this century they number forty now—raising up among us bands of holy and devoted women, giving themselves up to the recovery of the poor outcasts of our cities—urging us to purge ourselves from the pernicious system of pew-rents and seat-appropriations, by which the poor have been so long kept out of our sanctuaries, and debarred from the worship of God—if these be not fruits of faith and signs of life which are

the wonder even of our opponents, and tokens unmistakeable that the Lord has not deserted us, what can there be that is?

And when we estimate this, remember with what we must compare it. Not with an untrue ideal of what the Church might be, for "if the Church were what she ought to be, the world would be converted in a day*," but with what, in this evil world, has ever been actually attained. We would not willingly reproach our brethren, but when we are taunted with the evils which the Church of England suffers, we are constrained to ask, Are there no evils in the Church of Rome? Are all her members sound in faith and hearty in their allegiance? Are there not rather signs, beneath the veil of outward submission, of a covert infidelity, extending to the most vital points of faith—all the more dangerous for being concealed—which in France, and Germany, and Italy, is alienating from the Church of Rome vast multitudes of her professed adherents? Are we to shut our eyes to the crimes of the Inquisition, and other wickednesses which under the plea of faith have been sanctioned by the Church of Rome? Are we to say nothing of the immoralities to which the forced confessional and the compulsory celibacy of the clergy has in this and earlier ages given rise, and caused the influence of the Church

* St. Cyril.

to be regarded as hostile to the sanctities of home?

Does Rome tolerate no admitted evils? The extravagances of saint-worship and pretended miracles, when she does not sanction, does she dare to stop them? Where the voice of the Pope is omnipotent, is it exerted to discourage any of the plain perversions of Scriptural and primitive truth? Before taunting us with our troubles, which we groan under and deplore, and do our utmost to remove, we bid the Romanist look at home, and not seek to deny the presence of God to us on grounds that would be fatal to himself.

There is no possible room for doubt that the Church of England is a true and living branch of the Catholic Church of Christ, and that in it we enjoy to the fullest extent the means of grace and salvation which the Lord has bestowed upon His Church. It remains only that we use them aright. The spirit of doubt and unbelief, of restlessness and discontent, of impatience and self-will, will neutralize the highest privileges, and turn "a place of broad rivers and streams" into a very desert. The means of grace are invaluable blessings if they bring us in true humility to Christ. The end of all is that we may know Him, and to know Him is peace in this world and life eternal in the next. Let us, "built" as we are "on the foundation of the Apostles and prophets," seek

for ourselves and our brethren to grow more and more in faith, and love, and holiness, "till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ *."

* Ephes. iv. 13.

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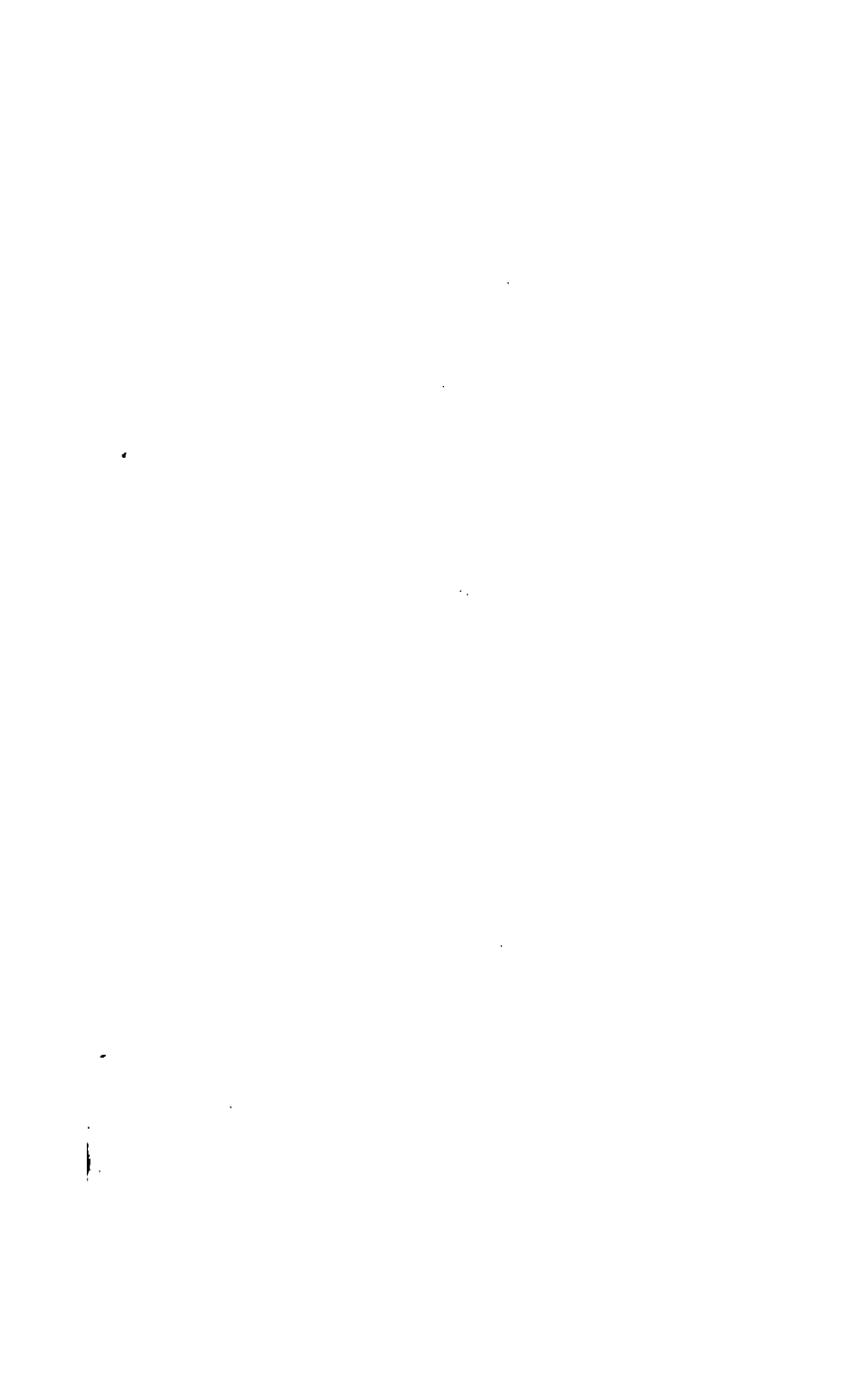
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